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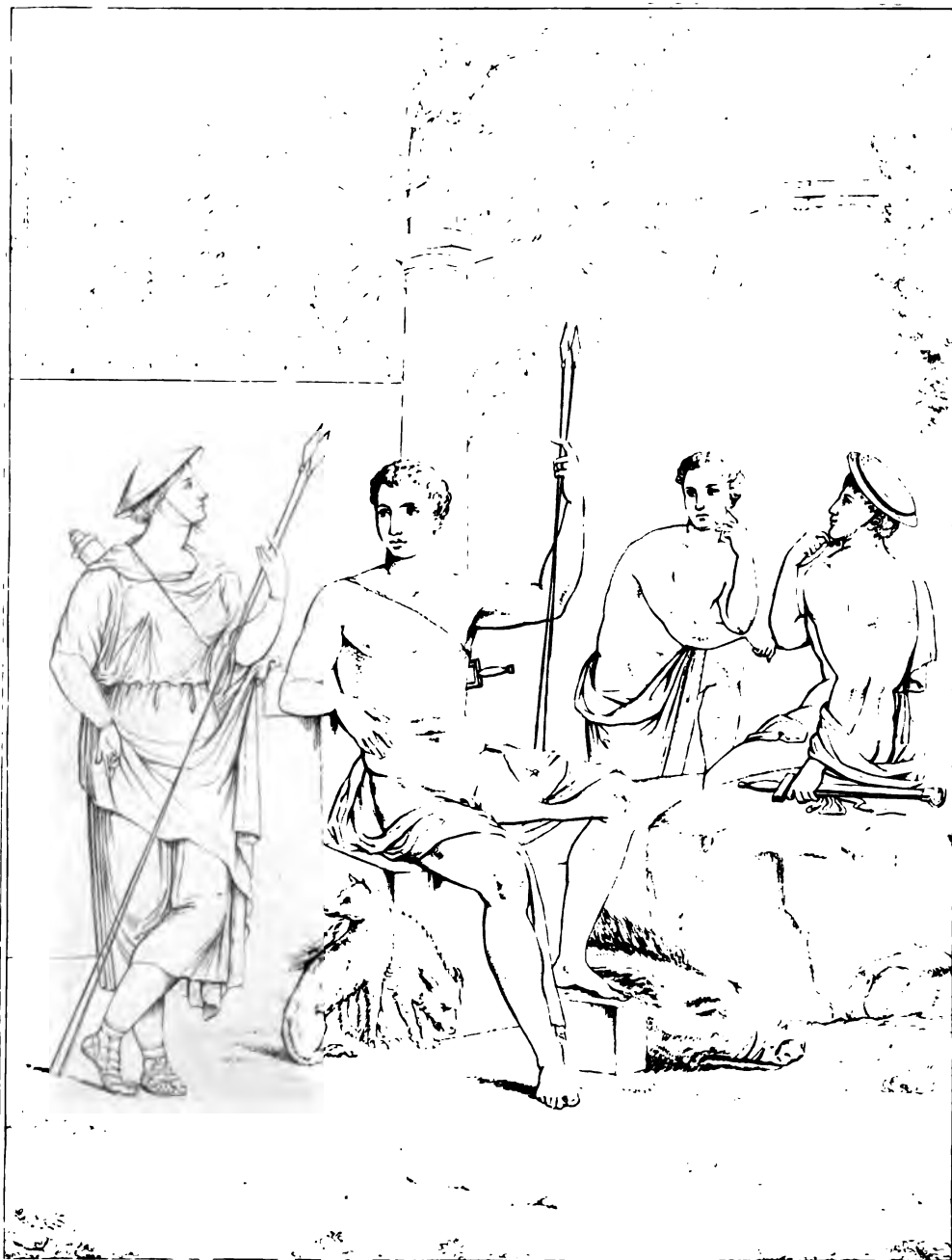
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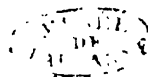
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FABLES AND TALES,

SUGGESTED BY

THE FRESCOS OF POMPEII AND HERCULANEUM.

BY W. B. LE GROS.

*Prætulorim scriptor delirus inæque videri,
Dum mea delectent mala me, vel denique fallant,
Quam sapere, et ringi.* HORAT. Ep. II. lib. 2.

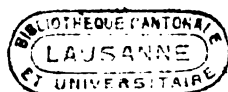
If such the plagues and pains to write by rule.
Better, say I, be pleased, and play the fool:
Call, if you will, bad rhyming a disease,
It gives men happiness, or leaves them ease. POPE.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THAT the weakest go to the wall, is an old and vulgar adage, which I am not sure that I clearly understand; but, if its meaning be that they look to it as a means of support, my own Muse will undoubtedly afford a new and striking example of its truth, since, in her progress through the following pages, she will be found constantly resorting to the classic walls of Pompeii and Herculaneum to guide her tottering steps.

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FABLES AND TALES.

B



Illustrated by F. J. Gould

Forster. Published 1825 by B. Colverly, 5, New Burlington Street

THE STORK AND THE LIZARD.

A Fable followed by a moral
Should act like infants' bells and coral ;
The first with jingle should invite
Each grown-up babe to take a bite ;
The second should, instead of tooth, 5
Produce some salutary truth.
'Tis hence I venture to relate
How, to avoid the dreadful fate
Of being gobbled up alive,
A cunning Lizard did contrive. 10

In ancient days, when beasts could speak,
And Wisdom's precepts might be heard
Proceeding from th' inspired beak
Of great Minerva's fav'rite bird,

It chanced that on the Sarno's side 15
A Stork, whose step betokened pride,
Beheld with most contemptuous sneer
The Swallows on its surface clear,
And Sand-birds on the neighb'ring beach,
Pursuing with discordant screech 20
Some flies that, when obtained at last,
Made but a sorry day's repast.

He cast his lordly look around,
And seeing near him on the ground
A troop of Lizards in the sun, 25
In merry mood, disporting run,
He thought 'twould be a good occasion
For eating with some ostentation ;
And finding that his appetite
Was somewhat sharpened by the sight, 30
Approached one larger than the rest,
And thus the trembling wretch addressed.
" Stop, reptile ! at my bidding stay ;
' Thou 'rt destined to become my prey,

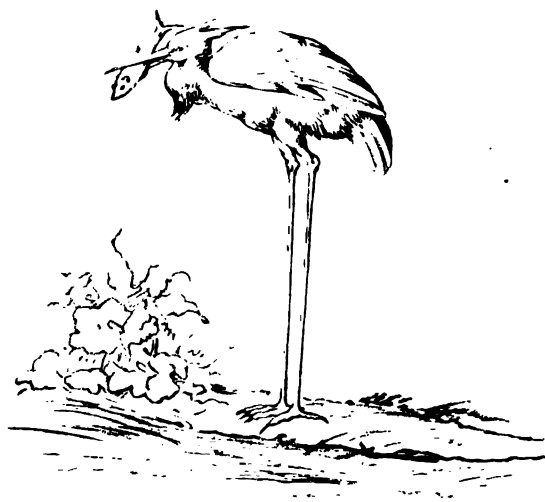
“ And show this low-bred, vulgar flight 35
“ Of Swallows, that offends my sight,
“ How at one gulp more food I gain
“ Than they with days of toil obtain.
“ Dispatch, if thou hast aught to say,
“ For hunger will not brook delay.” 40

Thus spake the Stork : the wretch before him
Beheld a long beak “in terrorem,”
And knowing that he could not hope
With such an enemy to cope,
Successfully, in strength or speed, 45
Determined, in such case of need,
Instead of fighting or of running,
To use his eloquence and cunning.
“ I should,” exclaimed the crafty Lizard,
“ Stick sadly in your royal gizzard ; 50
“ For doctors, ’tis well known, insist
“ That of all creatures which exist,
“ Whether they ’re beasts that roam the field,
“ Or birds that airy regions yield,

“ Or fishes in the briny deep, 55
“ Or reptiles on the earth that creep,
“ We little scaly Lizards are
“ Most indigestible by far :
“ And if your grace should make your dinner
“ On me, poor miserable sinner, 60
“ ’Twould cause, without the smallest doubt,
“ Dyspepsy, cholic, or the gout.
“ Wherefore, I humbly dare to pray
“ You ’ll leave me to pursue my way.
“ The Sarno yields much better fare ; 65
“ Then deign to listen to my prayer,
“ And let your clemency be shown,
“ If not for my sake—for your own.”

As thus he spoke, and whilst the question

’Twixt empty crop and indigestion 70
His fate seemed likely to decide,
Lo ! in the river’s friendly tide,
As if to crown the suppliant’s wish,
Sudden a glitt’ring shoal of fish



designed by R. Fowler

London: Published 1871, by E. Partridge, 15, New Burlington Street

THE STORK AND THE LIZARD.

7

The greedy Stork's attention caught, 75
Who, pouncing on them quick as thought,
Was pleased to find he could command
More wholesome food so near at hand,
And took it not the least in dudgeon
To leave our Lizard for a Gudgeon. 80

Whenever hapless suppliant's fate
Hangs on the fiat of the great,
To touch their feelings or their pride
Let every argument be tried ;
But still the strongest and the best 85
Is found to be SELF-INTEREST.

NOTES.

LINE 1.

A Fable followed by a moral

Should act like infants' bells and coral.

It would be useless to follow Aristotle through a long discussion as to the difference between a Fable and an Apologue, and all their subdivisions into Æsopian, Lydian, Cyprian, &c.; for my own, (unless they may be supposed to have some connexion with the last mentioned,) I fear, would not come under any description at all. The great father of critics, however, insists, that whatever the fable may be, it should have a moral expressed or understood; and with that rule, at least, I have endeavoured to comply to the best of my ability, though I fear that even my morals may sometimes be thought a little doubtful. As, however, I do not challenge the criticism of the fastidious, my ambition will be fully satisfied if I am now and then found by the more indulgent reader to realize what Phædrus, in his Prologue, says should be the object of a fable.

“ Duplex libelli dos est ; quod risum movet,

“ Et quod prudenti vitam consilio monet.

“ Calumniari si quis autem voluerit,

“ Quod et arbores loquantur, non tantum feræ ;

“ Fictis jocari nos meminerit fabulis.”

LINE 15.

*It chanced that on the Sarno's side
A Stork, whose step betokened pride.*

The Sarno is a beautifully clear stream, which, issuing from the base of a mountain, near a modern town of the same name, flows about twelve miles in a winding course through the plain in which the ruins of Pompeii are situated, (in fact, the "*quæ rigat æquora Sarnus*" of Virgil,) and falls into the sea immediately opposite to the insulated castle of Rovigliano. I will not vouch for the fact of there ever having been Storks on its banks; its vicinity to Pompeii must be my excuse for having made it the scene of my fable.

LINE 49.

*"I should," exclaimed the crafty Lizard,
"Stick sadly in your royal gizzard."*

It has been objected to me that Lizards are not naturally cunning; but the Lizard in question, (as depicted in the copy of a fresco with which I have been favoured,) has certainly a very persuasive air, and seems actually to be pleading his own cause. The original painting was destroyed in its removal; but there is excellent authority for its having existed, as well as the long-legged nondescript with the fish in his mouth.

VENUS AND CUPID.

EACH courtly dame or lowly lass
 Alike consults her looking-glass :
 If lovely, 'tis with satisfaction
 At seeing there so much attraction ;
 If not, 'tis with a hope to trace 5
 Some latent charm of form or face,
 Which, helped judiciously by art,
 May chance to catch a wand'ring heart.

No wonder, then, the Queen of Beauty,
 On going through such pleasing duty, 10
 One morning, when her own dear Spring
 Seemed to her charms new grace to bring,
 Should feel a thrill of proud delight
 On viewing that unrivalled sight,

Which, though the world it held subjected, 15
By her was only seen reflected.

The mirror Venus looked upon
Was held by her attendant son,
Who, though in childhood's tend'rest age,
Was yet so perfect as a page, 20
That when he saw his mother's eye
Kindle with well-fed vanity,
He thought 'twas just the time to ask
A boon in virtue of his task,
And cried, "Mamma, I do so wish 25
"That you would take me out to fish.
"You know you promised long ago
"Your darling son that sport to show;
"And now, I'm sure, you can't say nay,
"You look so beautiful to-day." 30

The latter well-placed argument
Home to the Goddess' feelings went;
And, parting Cupid's golden hair
With rose-tipped fingers long and fair,



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She kissed his forehead and replied,

35

“ Thy wishes shall be gratified.”

This said, the happy little God

Was furnished with a line and rod

By some attendant Nymph ; another

Was carried for his smiling mother,

40

Who to each line had fixed a bait

Which she, with female pride elate,

Conceived no fish could e'er withstand,

Formed as it was by Beauty's hand.

Within Cythera's favoured isle,

45

Where Nature erst, with brightest smile

And promise of eternal spring,

Her ready welcome seemed to bring

To Venus, when she first was seen

Rising from ocean, Beauty's Queen :

50

Within that island's deepest shade,

Where votive myrtles never fade,

Forth from the bosom of a hill
Escapes a streamlet's limpid rill :
At first the thraldom of the rock 55
With murmur loud its waters mock ;
But soon, the happiest of streams,
Content with liberty, it seems
To kiss its moss-grown banks and play
A thousand gambols on its way, 60
As with fantastic course it bends,
Whilst plenty on each turn attends,
And the glad peasants of the vale
Its fertilizing windings hail.
'Twas to this lovely river's side 65
That Venus now with Cupid hied;
And choosing a sequestered spot,
Where, shaded by o'erhanging grot,
Its deeper waters formed a pool
Of liquid crystal bright and cool, 70
Like him, in thoughtless, playful mood,
The Goddess gay her sport pursued.



The eyes of the delighted boy
Sparkled at first with childish joy,
When in their native streamlet clear 75
He saw the finny tribe appear,
And hasten courtier-like to wait
In due attendance on the bait,
Which he, with truly prince-like taste,
Now slowly trailed, now dragged in haste, 80
Now raised, now dropped with droll caprice,
Nor left the fish a moment's peace.
But Cupid, after having spent
An hour on such pursuit intent,
Began to think his sport would be 85
More satisfactory, if he
Could manage with his glitt'ring lure
Some bolder trifier to secure.
But all in vain the sportsman tried
To lay the nibblers at his side ; 90
In vain he watched each greedy gill
Gorge his now passive bait at will ;

For, though a sudden jerk might bear
Some glutton to the upper air,
As sudden came the hated splash,
Off his intended prey would dash,
And, darting nimbly through the tide,
Seem all his cunning to deride.

95

The baffled God, with angry pout,
Beheld the triumph of the Trout,
And begged his mother to explain
Why thus his efforts all were vain.

100

" Indeed, my dear, I cannot say,
" But why attempt to catch them, pray ?"

Inquired the Goddess ; " as for me,

105

" My great amusement is to see

" How this same silly tribe of fish

" All move obedient to my wish.

" Do mark that Chub with bloated cheeks,

" How painfully my bait he seeks !

110

" Whilst yonder merry little Dace

" So lightly hovers on the chase !

“ See, how th’ insinuating Eel
“ Seems cautiously his way to feel !
“ And how the fierce voracious Jack 115
“ Darts boldly forward to th’ attack !
“ To me ’tis really quite delight
“ To teaze them all with constant flight ;
“ And what the mother thinks good fun,
“ Should, surely, satisfy her son.” 120
“ For shame, Mamma !” cried little Cupid,
“ I never thought you half so stupid,
“ As thus, unblushing, to allow
“ That you have not a notion how
“ To catch this finny generation, 125
“ Whose triumph gives me such vexation.
“ If ’tis your pleasure here to dangle,
“ And waste your time in useless angle,
“ Know, *I* such paltry pastime scorn,
“ And wish your Goddessship good morn.” 130
Th’ indignant boy, with hasty flight,
Then vanished from his mother’s sight ;

But, as the screening rock he passed,
The long pent torrent burst at last,
And running faster still from fear 135
Lest she his sobs might chance to hear,
Whilst, pettishly, the stream he eyed,
The child forgot the God, and cried.
But, ere he thus had wandered far,
He heard the whirling of the car, 140
Whose coursers proudly seemed to bear
Minerva through the realms of air.
 'Twere mere conjecture, labour vain,
To seek the object to explain
Which brought that Goddess to an isle 145
So little favoured by her smile ;
For she but seldom bent her way
Where Venus held despotic sway,
And altars ne'er were known to raise
Their votive smoke in Wisdom's praise ; 150
But, as it chanced, the " blue-eyed dame "
Precisely at that moment came,

And little Cupid, fairly caught,
In vain to hide his weakness sought.

As lightly from her car she stept, 155
Minerva, seeing he had wept,
Fondly caressed his humid cheek,
And deigned his sorrow's cause to seek.

It may, perhaps, seem somewhat odd
That she should thus caress a God 160
Whose silly mother's vanity
Sought with her higher rank to vie ;
But Pallas, though she ne'er could sate
'Gainst Venus her immortal hate,
Had found her breastplate pervious prove 165
To the sweet smiles of infant love.

And oft-times would she condescend
(Such wisdom I, for one, commend,)
To drive severer thoughts away,
With Cupid in "a game at play." 170
Hence, when with blush, where shame and joy
Contending strove, the petted boy

Had told his mighty cause of woe,
She begged his tackle he would show ;
Good-naturedly resolved to try 175
Her little friend to gratify.

A smile came o'er her face divine
At sight of Cupid's rod and line ;
(Such smile is seen in courtly throng,
When rivals break down in a song ;) 180
And, laughing scornfully, she cried,
" I marvel not the fish defied
" Your efforts, since, of flight secure,
" They well might tear your hookless lure.
" Worthy of Venus was the thought 185
" That they by bait alone were caught ;
" But, Cupid, you shall quickly see
" What 'tis to have a friend in me."

A piece of steel, as thus she spoke,
Minerva from her armour broke, 190
And having added to the line
A hook contrived by art divine,

O'er it the former lure she spread ;
 Then, giving it to Cupid, said,
 " There, take your line, my pretty boy, 195
 " No longer now a useless toy,
 " But made to gratify your wish :
 " For, with my hook to catch the fish
 " Attracted by your mother's bait,
 " Your sport is certain to be great." 200

The eager boy scarce stopped to thank
 The Goddess ; but the river's bank
 Regained with breathless speed, and found
 Fair Venus going still the round
 Of piscatorial flirtation, 205
 Precisely in her former station.

Without delay his bait he threw
 And forth a Trout in triumph drew ;
 His mother heard his joyful cry,
 But would not please his vanity 210
 By other notice than a glance,
 At what she thought th' effect of chance.

But when she saw his finny store
Increasing ever more and more ; 215
When mingled Gudgeons, Eels, and Dace,
In dying struggles splashed her face,
She cried, " Do tell me, Cupid, how
" You, who went pouting off just now
" Because you could not catch one fish,
" Land them as quickly as you wish ? 220
" Why does not like success await
" My efforts, with the self-same bait,
" Which seems infallible with you ?"
" Your bait the fish attracts, 'tis true,"
Quoth he, triumphantly, " but, look ! 225
" I catch them with Minerva's hook."

Beauty, fair ladies, is a bait
Which, though its first effect be great,
Still, being nothing but a lure,
Must fail affection to secure, 230

And soon or late desertion brook,
Unless 'tis aided by a hook
Whose point is doubly barbed by
Good-sense and amiability.

NOTES.

LINE 11.

*One morning, when her own dear Spring
Seemed to her charms new grace to bring.*

It seems almost needless to give authority for a fact which all must feel, that Spring is the true season of Venus; but Horace says,

“ Ut tamen nôris quibus advoceris
“ Gaudiis; Idus tibi sunt agendæ,
“ Qui dies mensem Veneris marinæ
“ Findit Aprilem.”

And Ovid. *Fast.* lib. iv.

“ Venimus ad quartum, quo tu celeberrima, mensem,
“ Et vatem, et mensem scis, Venus, esse tuos.”

LINE 15.

*Which, though the world it held subjected,
By her was only seen reflected.*

The universal power of Venus is thus described by Homer in his Hymn to that Goddess:—

Μοῦσα, μαι ἴνισσι ἱργα πολυχρόνου Ἀφροδίτης,
Κύπριδος, ἥτις θεῶσσι καὶ γλυκύν ἱμερον ἄρσει,

Καὶ εἴδαμεν αὖτε φύλα καταδρατῶν ἀνδρώπων,
 Οἰωνοὶ τι διπνικτίας, καὶ θηρία πάντα,
 Ἴμην δὲ ἥκυρος πολλὰ τρίβει, ἥδ' ἴσα πόνοτος.

And Theocritus says she could subdue Jove himself.

Θυμὸν ἀνίσταται παρθενὸς βελίσει
 Κόρυδος, ἢ μὲν δυνάται καὶ Ζεῦσι δαμάσθαι.

LINE 17.

*The mirror Venus looked upon
 Was held by her attendant son.*

The fresco here alluded to still remains, in the house of Meleager, at Pompeii. The object in the hands of Cupid does undoubtedly more resemble a casket for jewels than a modern looking-glass; but I take the liberty of following the opinion of those who think that ancient mirrors were frequently placed in similar cases. The Venus, at all events, has the air of being perfectly well satisfied by her recent glance at the contents of the case in question: and what casket, let me ask, can possibly contain a more lovely gem, or one more satisfactory to its possessor, than perfect female beauty?

LINE 45.

*Within Cythera's favoured isle,
 Where Nature erst, with brightest smile.*

Hesiod says that Venus rose from the sea near the island of Cythera, and was wafted on shore by the Zephyrs. Homer,

E

in his Hymns, gives a similar account of her rising; but says it was in Cyprus she landed; "et adhuc sub iudice lis est."

LINE 51.

*Within that island's deepest shade,
Where votive myrtles never fade.*

That the myrtle was sacred to Venus we are informed by Virgil, Eclog. vii.

"Populus Alcidæ gratissima; Vitis Iaccho;
"Formosæ Veneri Myrtus; sua Laurea Phœbo."

There are quantities of other authorities, but that most to the purpose is of Ovid, who seems to hint that it grew abundantly in Cythera. Speaking of Venus, whom he had invoked, he says,

"Mota Cytheriacâ leviter mea tempora Myrto
"Contigit, et, cæptum perforce, dixit, opus."

LINE 71.

*Like him, in thoughtless, playful mood,
The Goddess gay her sport pursued.*

The fresco representing this scene is to be found in the "House of the Poet," at Pompeii.

LINE 107.

*How this same silly tribe of fish
All move obedient to my wish.*

If that most amiable inflicter of torture, Isaac Walton, should chance to peep up from his grave and honour me by reading this fable, I fear he would find great fault with my ignorance of "the gentle art," and tell me that one and the same bait would never succeed in attracting all the different kinds of fish I mention. Under such correction I should kiss the "rod," although no "brother of the angle;" and, in my defence, simply beg old Isaac to remember that, as fabulists are allowed to endue fish (supposed to be by nature mute) with the human faculty of speech, it is no great licence to make their likeness to mankind consist in their common pursuit of "a glittering bait."

LINE 161.

*Whose silly mother's vanity
Sought with her higher rank to vie.*

That Minerva came next in rank to her father, we are thus informed by Horace, who, speaking of Jupiter, says,

"Unde nil majus generatur ipso,
"Nec viget quidquam simile, aut secundum;
"Proximos illi tamen occupavit
"Pallas honores."

Notwithstanding all this, Venus bore away the palm of beauty from the greater personage. How often do we see the charms of a duchess eclipsed by those of her "*femme de chambre*!"



Fig. 1. Prometheus.

PERSEUS AND ANDROMEDA.

ANDROMEDA with ceaseless pout
 Had worn poor Perseus' patience out,
 Teazing from morn till night to see
 The Gorgon's physiognomy.

At first the hero thought it best 5
 To argue on the strange request ;
 But soon discovered it was treason
 A beauty to oppose with reason.

Sometimes he soothed her with caresses,
 Played fondly with her flowing tresses, 10
 And praised her beauties one by one—
 By flatt'ry wonders oft are done ;

But though she answered to his flame
With equal ardour, still the dame
Would whisper 'midst their am'rous play, 15
" Do show the head, my love, to-day."

Sometimes he thought it fit to scold—
But all the world knows well, of old,
Nor man, nor demi-god can hope
With female eloquence to cope. 20

Sometimes, again, he vainly sought
To change the subject of her thought ;
Told of the regions he'd explored,
Extolled the virtues of his sword,
Displayed the all-resplendent shield. 25
Which Pallas' self had deigned to wield,
Showed Pluto's helmet, Merc'ry's wings—
Gifts such as Gods bestow on Kings ;
And then the dangers he recounted,
Which by their aid he had surmounted. 30

But when he thought his point attained
And her attention fairly gained,

His wife would, suddenly, exclaim,

" I doubt not of your deeds and fame,

" But, having always heard it said 35

" That the dead Gorgon's snaky head

" Is far more wonderful than all

" To which you now my notice call,

" It really does seem very hard

" From such a sight to be debarred. 40

" You have it, I am sure, concealed

" Beneath your garments or your shield :

" You have, you tiresome man ! you know it ;

" I wish to Heaven that you would show it."

Now had they lived as man and wife 45

Too often do, to end the strife,

The fatal head he would have shown,

And turned his better half to stone ;

But Perseus, still an ardent lover,

Racked his invention to discover 50

Some other means of satisfaction,

Without producing petrification.

It chanced, as musing thus one day
Our puzzled hero took his way,
That a small pool his progress stopped, 55
And, as a careless glance he dropped
Upon its mirror clear though rude,
His own reflected form he viewed.
On Perseus' mind a pleasing light
Burst as he gazed upon the sight : 60
“ This friendly water would disarm
“ The Gorgon of her baneful charm ;
“ And he, at length, without a fear,
“ Might gratify his sullen dear.”
With lighter step away he hied, 65
And forth, in triumph, led his bride,
When soon the sequel proved him right,
For scatheless she endured the sight ;
Instead of being turned to stone,
Resumed the smiles that long had flown, 70
And (blush not whilst you read, fair Misses !)
Signed on his lips the peace of kisses.



The wisest it would needs perplex
To please each fancy of the sex ;
But, husbands, it is worth the trial
Sometimes, instead of rude denial,
To prove like Perseus your affection,
By calling to your aid " reflection."

75

NOTES.

LINE 28.

Gifts such as Gods bestow on Kings.

The Gods were very fond of equipping those whom they patronized; and Perseus seems to have been particularly favoured in this respect. Pluto lent him his own helmet, which had the quality of rendering its bearer invisible; Vulcan gave him a short sword in the shape of a pruning-hook; Minerva gave him a shining buckler; and Mercury furnished him with wings and "talaria."

LINE 51.

*Some other means of satisfaction,
Without producing petrification.*

I must confess that I have made Perseus a very stupid fellow for not thinking of making the same use of his shield on this occasion as on a former one.

"Narrat Agenorides———

* * * * *

"Gorgoneas tetigisse domus; passimque per agros,

"Perque vias vidisse hominum simulacra, ferarumque,

"In silicem ex ipsis visâ conversa Medusâ;

"Se tamen horrendæ clypei, quod læva gerebat,

"Ære repperusso formam adspexisse Medusæ."

Ovid. Met.

But had he done so for Andromeda, there would be an end to my fable.

LINE 67.

*When soon the sequel proved him right,
For scatheless she endured the sight.*

There are several frescos on this subject; that from which the annexed copy is taken is in the house of Endymion, at Pompeii.

ARIADNE.

IN days of old the marriage vow
 Was not much better kept than now ;
 For Deities and mortals strove
 To imitate the deeds of Jove.
 But whilst each vagrant God and hero 5
 (Whose honour must have sunk to zero)
 Most polygamically sought
 Fresh wives where'er they could be caught,
 Mythology will scarce afford
 An instance of deserted lord ; 10
 Except, of course, fair Helen's case,
 Though even she contrived t' efface
 The mem'ry of her broken vows,
 By coaxing her forgiving spouse.

As far as running is concerned, 15
The tables now indeed are turned ;
A modern husband, tied for life
To scold or spendthrift as a wife,
In vain attempts to break away :
He need not love, but he must pay. 20
What though he fly to one more kind,
'Tis but his wife he leaves behind ;
Her debts pursue, whate'er his course,
(Like Care behind her victim's horse,)
And he is favoured by a summons, 25
For maintenance, from Doctors' Commons.
But if, of such ill-sorted pair,
It chance to be the lady fair
Who tries illicit honey-moon
With some broad-shouldered bold dragoon, 30
Her spouse, by ridicule assaulted,
Is like the righteous man exalted ;
And left to make the pleasant choice,
Obeying laws' or honour's voice,

Of spending thousands in "an action," 35
Or being shot for "satisfaction."

But, with respect to my assertion
Of ancient cases of desertion,
Mythology will well supply us :
That weeping coward self-styled pious, 40
By perjured vows and conduct vile,
Drove Dido to the burning pile :
And fifty others I could cite
Who left their wives in doleful plight,
Though none in baseness could exceed 45
Th' Athenian Prince's treach'rous deed.

To Naxos' undulating isle,
Whose vine-clad hills with plenty smile,
Theseus and Ariadne came,
While Cupid still fanned Hymen's flame ; 50
As fond a pair as e'er was seen
At the first stage from Gretna's Green ;

His love, for lack of other food,
Might well have fed on gratitude,
Since, from the fatal Lab'rinth led 55
In safety by her gift of thread,
He owed his freedom and his life
To the kind foresight of his wife.

I know not, nor does hist'ry say,
How many months had passed away 60
Before that harbinger of woes,
The first connubial tiff, arose ;
Nor can I clearly state its cause,
Since married folks contend for straws :
But, as a calm succeeds a storm, 65
Perchance the hero grew less warm,
And she, with love but ill requited,
May have conceived her merits slighted,
And, to her recreant lord's vexation,
Too oft recalled his obligation. 70

But, whether I am right or not
About the cause, it was their lot

To find their once sweet solitude
 Made bitter by discussions rude,
 In which, no doubt, the angry tide 75
 Flowed strongest on the lady's side.
 Let not her memory be chid
 Too harshly even if it did.

Those censors, less gallant than bold,
 Who find such fault that women scold, 80
 Forget that with so many charms
 They needs must have some sort of arms.
 We men, when schoolboys, can insist
 On points disputed with the fist ;
 And, when our age or our condition 85
 Compels more dignified position,
 Are able still with shot or sword
 To punish an insulting word :
 But we are scandalized outright
 If e'er we see a woman fight. 90

What then must injured women do ?
 The answer 's plain,—enact the shrew,

And, with befitting strength of lungs,
Employ their wondrous gift of tongues.

Theseus, at times, would deign to try 95
By soothing words to pacify
The ruffled temper of his lady ;
Or, leading her to covert shady,
When he had nothing left to say,
Would kiss her angry words away. 100

And thus they led the sort of life
That many a modern man and wife,
'Twixt peace and war, oft pass together,
Like sun and cloud in April weather.

But one sad morning,—'twas by day 105
The lady to her tongue gave way,
Thinking it politic and right
To make the quarrels up at night ;
One morning, when domestic strife
Had been unusually rife, 110
The deafened hero sought the shore
To soothe his ears with ocean's roar.

Not like Achilles in despair
 At recent loss of captive fair ;
 But there, in angry mood, he went 115
 His lady's presence to lament.
 As thus he chafed, disgust and spite
 His flick'ring love extinguished quite,
 When chancing to approach the bay
 Where his small bark at anchor lay, 120
 Sudden the wicked thought arose
 Of flying from his wedded woes.
 Such thoughts, which pious men would show
 Direct from Satan's malice flow,
 And Epicurus' sect advance 125
 To be the pure result of chance,
 In Theseus' case, I think, might rise
 From having there before his eyes
 The means of sailing off, to try
 The pleasures of variety. 130
 But, whatsoe'er their cause, they pressed
 With force resistless on a breast

Already predisposed to hate

The once loved partner of his fate.

The die was cast, his crew was told 135

The bark in readiness to hold ;

But Theseus till the dead of night

Determined to defer his flight,

And thus without a scene depart :

For though his own obdurate heart 140

Could well resist a woman's tear,

Some sailor, he had cause to fear,

Before he could get well afloat,

Might mutinize his little boat,

And, spite of his commander's order, 145

Assist his injured wife on board her.

Meantime the day, as oft before,

He spent in roving on the shore ;

But his appearance duly made

When Hesp'rus shone above the shade ; 150

Lest absence at the hour of rest

Some vague suspicion might suggest.

As now the lady and her lord,
 At distant corners of the board,
 In silence made their night's repast, 155
 She, little thinking 'twas the last
 In which her overtures must brook
 His cold, repulsive, scornful look,
 Of all her little arts made use
 To bring about the wished-for truce. 160

The salt, for instance, seemed to stand
 Beyond the reach of Theseus' hand ;
 She placed it near, and furtive flashes
 Of passion glanced from silken lashes ;
 But not one look did he accord 165
 The act to notice or reward.

Next, of the viands placed around
 She chose the best that could be found,
 And, with insinuating smile,
 Tow'rd's Theseus moved the sav'ry pile. 170
 Still not a look ; he took the platter
 Quite as an ordinary matter,

And ate as though to save his life,
Without once looking at his wife.

But women, whether maids or married, 175
When any point is to be carried,
Are not so easily defeated ;
And Ariadne, though ill treated,
Undaunted still, with goblet large
Returned a third time to the charge. 180
The wine that sparkled to the brim
She sipped, then passing it to him,
With eyes as sparkling, seemed to say,
“ There ! wash your sullen mood away,
“ And pledge your culprit’s inclination 185
“ For speedy reconciliation.”
Yet even this attempt was vain ;
For, though the wine she saw him drain,
Not for one moment did his eyes
Above the ample goblet rise ; 190
But seemed its inmost depths t’ explore
As if to seek for deeper store.

The lady, once more driven back,
 Ceased for the present her attack ;
 Content her last reserve to keep, 195
 Till after her tormentor's sleep.
 For though before he tasted rest,
 He often spurned her from his breast,
 She never yet had found him prove
 Averse, on waking, to her love. 200
 So when, at length, her sullen spouse,
 After a somewhat deep carouse,
 On nuptial couch with breathing deep
 Seemed buried in profoundest sleep,
 With confidence his lovely bride 205
 Took her position by his side,
 And soon into that slumber fell
 Which the false Theseus feigned so well.
 But, whilst she thus unconscious lay,
 The traitor, ere the break of day, 210
 Exchanged the matrimonial pillow
 For freedom on the stormy billow ;

And (thus concluding a career
In which, without remorse or tear,
Of friends and home he had bereft her,) 215
Weighed anchor, hoisted sail, and left her.

Her waking horrors who shall tell,
Save Ovid, who could paint so well
The quick transition of her thought
From the first moment when she sought 220
Her absent lord with outstretched arm,
To try her potent morning charm,
Until her wild suspicions' flow
Urged her the fatal truth to know,
And from lone Naxos' utmost height 225
His less'ning vessel met her sight?

Such grief I beg to pass in haste,
As little suited to my taste ;
Although, distinctly, I declare
My tender feelings for the fair 230
Would not permit me to make light
Of Ariadne's hapless plight,



London: Published 1855 by G. B. Whittier, 10, South Street, New York.

Were I not previously certain
 Of having left, behind the curtain,
 A remedy to heal her woes, 235
 And happily the drama close ;
 As slaughtered crowds to life all come,
 By Merlin's wand, in famed Tom Thumb.
 Imagine, then, dishevelled hair
 With all the symptoms of despair, 240
 And tears,—no, tears would scarcely flow
 In such impassioned case of woe ;
 Though oft the fiercest storm of grief
 In sleep's soft calm will find relief.
 'Twas thus that, at the midnight hour, 245
 The Cretan, in deserted bower,
 Was buried in that deep repose
 Which from exhausted nature flows ;
 And, as she slept, each softer beauty
 Returned, unbidden, to the duty 250
 From which the passions of the day
 Had rudely driven it away.

H

But here a God I must exhibit
Whom Horace' self would scarce prohibit ;
For, surely, none has greater right 255
In Naxos' isle to take delight.
Then let the great immortal come
With sound of cymbal and of drum,
Whilst vot'ries, shouting forth his praise,
Bear torches which, though bright their blaze, 260
Are dim before the looks divine
Of him the rosy God of Wine,
Who, 'midst the ivy-crowned throng,
Now leads the dance and now the song.
Great Bacchus from his fav'rite isle 265
Had long been absent, and with smile
Of joyful recognition viewed
Its hills uncultured then and rude,
Though doomed, in future, to become
At once his glory and his home. 270



Engraved by E. Fromery.

London, Published 1835 by H. B. Irving, 5 H. - Burlington Street

But since, as yet, it was his whim
 Naxos should welcome only him,
 He felt both anger and surprise
 When marks of footsteps met his eyes.
 His looks divine grew somewhat black, 275
 As first he followed on their track ;
 But when he reached the wooded glade
 Where Theseus had his dwelling made,
 His brow with rage was seen to lower
 At sight of the intrusive bower. 280
 Straight to the spot, with purpose dread
 Against the intruder, Bacchus led
 His band, when, lo ! their torches' glare
 Fell full upon the sleeping fair,
 An object fit for view divine : 285
 Her tresses, like his fav'rite vine,
 In beautiful confusion flung,
 Around her neck in clusters hung ;
 And as her bosom's half-seen snows
 In gentle palpitation rose, 290

Her breath in murmurs seemed to sip
Its honey from her rosy lip.
One hand—— but I've described enough
To soften bosom far more rough
Than that of Bacchus, who had entered 295
With ev'ry thought on vengeance centred ;
But now, at Ariadne's feet,
A suppliant fell in posture meet.

The sequel of my tale is plain,
For Gods like him sue not in vain ; 300
Nor did the waking lady make
Resistance when he sought to take
The post deserted at her side,
But strove her blushing face to hide :
Since, though she yielded with delight, 305
It was, in one short day and night,
A case embarrassing and odd
To lose a man and gain a God.

Ye new-made pairs of cooing Doves,
 Here take a hint about your loves, 310
 From "an ungraduated student."
 "Too much retirement is not prudent,
 "But rather hastens the detection
 "That neither party is perfection."

And, next, ye Wives of modern days, 315
 Give laws canonical due praise ;
 That husbands cannot, as of old,
 Escape from better halves that scold.

And ye, fair Maids, who being single
 At thoughts of matrimony tingle, 320
 Though once forsaken still be wise,
 Instead of crying out your eyes,
 Preserve their brightness to recover
 Some substitute for faithless lover.

NOTES.

LINE 11.

*Except, of course, fair Helen's case,
 Though even she contrived t' efface
 The mem'ry of her broken vows
 By coarsing her forgiving spouse.*

It is well known, that at the conclusion of the Trojan war, the fair cause of it, to make her peace with Menelaus, betrayed her then husband, Deiphobus, whose shade thus informs Æneas of the fact,

“ Infelix habuit thalamus, pressitque jacentem
 “ Dulcis et alta quies placidæque simillima morti.
 “ Egregia interea conjux arma omnia tectis
 “ Emovet, et fidum capiti subduxerat ensem :
 “ Intra tecta vocat Menelaum et limina pandit,
 “ Scilicet id magnum sperans fore munus amanti,
 “ Et famam exstingui veterum sic posse malorum.”

Menelaus “received her to his grace again,” and, as Zanga would say, “The world must call him wondrous, wondrous kind.”

LINE 23.

*Her debts pursue, whate'er his course,
Like Care behind her victim's horse.*

"Post equitem sedet atra Cura."—Hor.

LINE 40.

That weeping coward self-styled pious.

"Sum pius Æneas, Libycis ereptus ab undis."

In spite of Dryden's famous defence of the character of Æneas, I cannot help thinking him the most cowardly, mean-spirited, and dishonourable of all those adventurers of antiquity to whom I have ventured to apply the epithet of "vagrant." We find him always weeping in danger, or "duplices tendens ad sidera palmas," instead of exerting himself like a man; we find him, moreover, breaking faith whenever it suits him to do so, and finally fighting (under his mother's protection) in the most unjust cause imaginable.

LINE 47.

*To Naxos' undulating isle,
Whose vine-clad hills with plenty smile.*

Though the "clustering Cyclades" sound very well in Byron, they are now a sadly barren-looking group. Naxos, however, is the largest and most fertile, and probably in Virgil's time merited his description,

"Bacchatamque jugis Naxon."

LINE 57.

*He owed his freedom and his life
To the kind foresight of his wife.*

" Utque ope virgineâ nullis iterata priorum
" Janna difficilis filo est inventa relecto ;
" Protinus Ægides raptâ Minoide Dian
" Vela dedit, comitemque suam crudelis in illo
" Littore deseruit. Desertæ et multa querenti
" Amplexus et opem Liber dedit."—Ovid. Met.

LINE 63.

*Nor can I clearly state its cause,
Since married folks contend for straws.*

Ovid says, De arte amandi,

" Hoc decet uxores ; dos est uxoria lites."

LINE 109.

*One morning, when domestic strife
Had been unusually rife.*

I ought perhaps to apologise to Ariadne's memory for thus making a scold of her ; but there must have been some cause for the shameful desertion of Theseus, and I cannot imagine a better one. Some, indeed, say that Theseus, having received a hint to that effect from Bacchus, left his wife behind for the peculiar oblectation of that God. If such was the case, he was a most accommodating husband, and would do honour

to modern Italy. Others again say, the desertion of Ariadne was caused by the instigation of Venus, who pursued with vengeance all the descendants of Apollo, in consequence of his having published to the celestial world her amours with Mars. Ariadne was Apollo's granddaughter; her mother Pasiphae was the offspring of that God and Perseis, one of the Oceanidæ.

LINE 220.

*From the first moment when she sought
Her absent lord with outstretched arm.*

"Incertum vigilans, à somno languida, movi

"Thesea pressuras semisupina manus ;

"Nullus erat : referoque manus iterumque retento,

"Perque torum moveo brachia ; nullus erat."

Ovid. Ep.

These, and the lines following them, form the description alluded to.

LINE 253.

*But here a God I must exhibit
Whom Horace' self would scarce prohibit.*

"Nec Deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus."

The criticisms of Horace refer to tragic or epic poetry; with which mine, I fear, has but too little in common ; yet the dis-

tress of Ariadne would, in any case, be allowed to be a
 “dignus vindice nodus.”

LINE 268.

*Its hills uncultured then and rude,
 Though doomed, in future, to become
 At once his glory and his home.*

Ariadne says, in her epistle already quoted,

“Quid faciam? quo sola ferar? vacat insula cultu.

“Non hominum video, non ego facta boum.”

It is therefore fair to suppose that Bacchus had not, as yet, put his plans of improvement into execution; and it must have been some time afterwards that, recovering from a drunken bout, he desired the boatmen who had taken charge of him, to carry him *home* to Naxos.

“Naxon, ait Liber, cursus advertite vestros:

“Illa mihi domus est.—Ovid. Met. lib. iii.

LINE 307.

*A case embarrassing and odd,
 To lose a man and gain a God.*

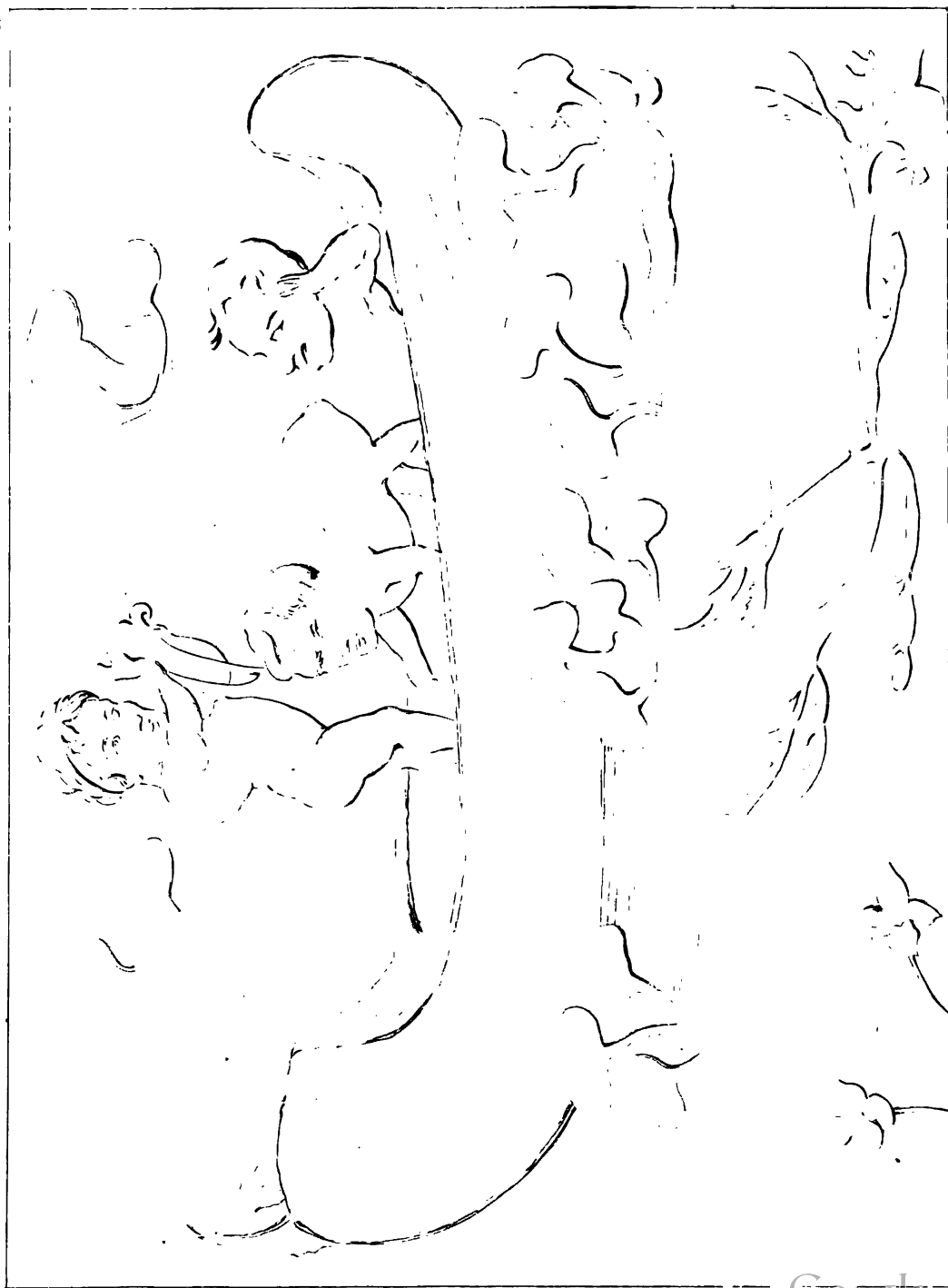
However embarrassing it may have been, Ovid very justly observes that Ariadne had every reason to be satisfied with the change of lovers:

'Jam bene perjuro mutârat conjugè Bacchum,
"Quæ dedit ingrato fila legenda viro ;
" Sorte tori gaudens. 'Quem flebam rustica,' dixit,
" ' Utiliter nobis perfidus ille fuit.' "

LINE 311.

From "an ungraduated student."

Student, I mean, in the "University of Venus," which, thanks to that Goddess, is conducted on much more liberal principles than those of Oxford and Cambridge. She is, indeed, an "Alma Mater" far more indulgent than they, since she allows her "Undergraduates" to call themselves "Bachelors," and to keep their names on her books, without forcing them into the "Schools of Matrimony," in which it is the "honours," and not the "examination," that are to be dreaded ; for whereas a "double first class" is seldom attained, the Cambridge distinction of "wrangler" is, unfortunately, only too common.



1870

1871

1872

1873

1874

1875

1876

THE PYGMIES AND THE CRANES.

IN the vast Æthiopian waste
 By most geographers is placed—
 Pray, ask not how the fact they trace—
 The seat of the Pygmæan race.
 A race so cheated of proportions 5
 That some conceive they were abortions,
 Who, by their parents spurned and hated,
 Had to the desert emigrated.
 Others again as gravely state,
 Old Pagans too of note and weight, 10
 That they indigenous were found
 On central Afric's sandy ground.
 But such opinion needs must fail
 In modern ages to prevail ;

Since all believing Christians find 15
Undoubted proof that all mankind
(Scripture to tell the fact vouchsafeth,)
Descend from Shem and Ham and Japheth
But, whatsoe'er the origin
Of Pygmies, I will now begin 20
My notice of them with a story
Redounding greatly to their glory.
And if there be its truth who doubt,
Philostratus must bear me out,
And by the shadow of his name 25
Hide my veracity from blame.

When Hercules had done to death
Antæus, squeezing out his breath,
Exhausted on the Libyan shore
The hero slept with deep-toned snore. 30
For even heroes, now and then,
Snore when they sleep, like other men.

As thus insensible he lay,
A Pygmy squadron passed that way,
And when in claps prolonged and clear 35
His nasal thunder struck their ear,
Surprised to hear the hills around
Re-echo such an unknown sound,
These gallant knights set spur to goat,
And, guided by the sleeper's note, 40
Stopped not their course until they found
His form gigantic on the ground.

Alcides by his club was known,
And here the Pygmies' valour shone ;
For though they knew that one so great 45
Their army might annihilate,
If they provoked him by attack
Whilst lying peaceful on his back :
Still, when the flatt'ring prospect came
Of adding to their martial fame, 50
Each doubt gave way, and one and all,
Swearing to conquer or to fall,

Their spears of rushes set in rest,
And tilted at his head and breast.

The buzzing of their first career 55
So slightly struck Alcides' ear,
It scarce his slumbers served to break ;
But, half asleep and half awake,
He opened not his heavy eyes,
And, thinking them a swarm of flies, 60
Tapped with his hand this way and that,
Like one who tries to kill a gnat.

Full twenty Pygmies fell around
Slain or ungoated on the ground ;
But the main body formed again 65
At some short distance on the plain,
And, with redoubled fury, sped
To die with or avenge the dead.

Some strength of faith you now may need
To make you credit what you read, 70
Though true as aught the Gospels tell
Is the sad chance that next befell

When in this second charge the lance
Of the first Pygmy in advance,
Grazing Alcides' goodly nose, 75
Caused him with sneeze to lay his foes,
Knights, chargers, panoply and all,
Prostrate in one promiscuous fall.
Just as a child by breathing hard
Upon his leading man of card, 80
Without e'en moving from his post,
O'erthrows his num'rous, mimic host.

Now, though some drops of blood there trickled,
And Herc'les' nose was sorely tickled,
His fancy still was tickled more 85
When he proceeded to explore
The chosen warriors of a nation
Felled to the earth by sternutation.
At first, so great was his surprise,
He scarce believed his drowsy eyes ; 90
But when, by dint of yawn and shake,
At length convinced he was awake,

The hero fairly laughed outright
At such a droll and novel sight.

Ill could Pygmæan chieftain brook 95
E'en Hercules' contemptuous look ;
But struggling, like a living fish
Amidst its fellows in a dish,
Above the mass contrived to poke
His head, and thus indignant spoke. 100

“ Laugh on, Alcides, if you deem
“ Such mirth can Jove's great son beseem.
“ Deride, insensate as you 're great,
“ The Pygmies in their fallen state ;
“ Enjoy your triumph too, but know 105
“ Such triumph to mere chance you owe.
“ 'Tis true that, with a waking sneeze,
“ You 've strewn us here like fallen trees ;
“ But, had you slept a little longer,
“ We Pygmies should have proved the stronger, 110
“ And, with our oft-repeated blows,
“ Have pierced your head as well as nose.”

As, brandishing his spear, he ceased,
Alcides' wonder was increased,
That imps, no higher than his thumb, 115
With hostile purpose should have come ;
But valour, in his noble mind,
Responsive chord was sure to find ;
So, feeling not the least offended
At all the mischief they 'd intended, 120
He cried, " My gallant little friend,
" Let not my smiles so much offend ;
" The chance of war has laid you low,
" But I will aid my fallen foe.
" For, though I laugh to see your plight 125
" After the late unequal fight,
" I like your looks and courage too ;
" And now, to prove my words are true,
" Will bear you to Eurystheus' court,
" To which you 'll add a fresh support, 130
" And, surely, will not think it hard
" To form his ' POCKET BODY-GUARD.' "

Thus speaking, with consid'rate care
Raising the Pygmies in the air,
One after one he popped them in 135
The great Nemæan lion's skin,
Which, though the simile be tame,
He carried like a bag of game :
And when, at length, he reached Mycenæ,
Where Pygmies never had been seen, he 140
Greatly astonished all beholders
By lifting armies from his shoulders.

This in Pygmæan history
Is but an episode, and I,
Having been sadly led astray, 145
Must hasten forward on my way
To subject more important far,
Their great, hereditary war.

As country squires are sure to hate
The owner of the next estate, 150
So has each nation and each king
A certain knack of quarrelling,

(In spite of diplomatic labours,)

Most fiercely with their nearest neighbours ;

And Cranes and Pygmies, it appears, 155

Thus fell together by the ears.

The Cranes, a long-necked generation,

Time out of mind, had held their station

Where the great Niger's waters glide

In most inexplicable tide ; 160

And there, contentedly enough,

Inhabited the dwellings rough

That reeds afforded, and for food

Betook them to their native flood.

But though both birds and beasts may be 165

Contented with their destiny,

That " Lord of the Creation " man,

All records prove it, never can ;

But urges still his search profound

O'er lawful or forbidden ground. 170

Our friends, the Pygmies, being then

A sort of Lilliputian men,

Were soon incited to explore
The windings of the Niger's shore.

The Cranes but slight attention paid 175
To the first inroads that were made ;
And though, at length, with jealous eye
They viewed their growing frequency,
Their little neighbours would not hurt
By any hostile act overt. 180

But as a mine may harmless lie
Though prompt its baneful force to ply
When slightest spark ignites the train,
So 'twas with Pygmy and with Crane ;
And from the chase of dragon-flies 185
Their mighty warfare did arise.

It seems, to follow such diversions,
The Pygmies yearly made excursions
To where those flies were most in force,
On Niger's low and marshy course ; 190
And, quite regardless of the damp,
Pitched, for a time, their rustic camp,

Content to take things in the rough
As long as they had sport enough.
From some such camp a shooting party 195
Of young patricians, strong and hearty,
Took, as it chanced, one luckless day,
To a more distant spot their way,
Where, in the river's broadest tide,
A little rushy isle they spied, 200
Which promised an extent of cover
By Pygmy ne'er as yet shot over.
I leave all sportsmen to suppose
How at the sight their ardour rose :
But how were they to reach the spot, 205
For boats these little men had not,
And wading suited not at all
With Nimrods of a size so small ?
The more fool-hardy chose to swim,
But suffered sadly for their whim ; 210
For though, by puffing and by splashing,
They reached the isle in manner daahing,

Their pop-guns, wetted on the way,
Were rendered useless for the day.
The rest, by their example wise, 215
Then sought around with anxious eyes
Some temporary raft or boat
On which securely they might float ;
Nor sought in vain, for having found
Gourds growing on the marshy ground, 220
With cockle-shell, which served for scoop,
They formed their barks from stern to poop ;
And, manning with divided crews
Of threes and fours these strange canoes,
Reached, as the water was not rough, 225
The wished-for island safe enough.
'Twere merely waste of time to tell
The quantities of game that fell ;
Suffice to say, their sport had power
To make them all forget the hour, 230
Till warned by ev'ning's length'ning shades
To leave the island's reedy glades.



Illustration by H. J. Stanley

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But, ere the sportsmen could embark,
The night, alas ! had grown so dark
That they no longer now descried 235
The objects on the river's side ;
And, in their ill-directed course,
Arriving at a rapid's force,
Their boats were carried to a station
Established by the rival nation, 240
And cast away just where the Cranes,
With ingenuity and pains,
Had raised an outwork formed of reed,
To save their nests in case of need.
Aroused by such a rude attack, 245
These warlike birds, with angry clack,
Supposing they were come to pillage
The newly-built Venetian village,
Without a question sank each boat,
And, as the Pygmies rose to float, 250
Dispatched them with a tap or tweak
Delivered by resistless beak.

L

Of all that hapless sporting band
One only reached his native land :
Saved by a long and lucky dive, 255
He gained the nearest shore alive,
And, toil-worn, reached the Pygmy court,
So lately quitted for his sport,
Where his recital sad, though brief,
Excited mixed revenge and grief. 260
“ War !” was the cry, “ war to the knife !”
And, rushing on to mortal strife,
An army soon had sought the field,
Of Pygmies, never known to yield.
The Cranes with like precipitation 265
For war made all due preparation,
Convinced the quarrel could not be
Adjusted by diplomacy,
And knowing that their hasty action
Would call for instant satisfaction. 270

Would I had Homer's muse to tell
The glorious actions that befell ;
Or Pindar's flood of song to write
The deeds of each Pygmean knight !
But such attempts are not for me ; 275
And, humbler than Matinian bee,
I find it suits me best to say,
That years of warfare passed away,
In which success by turns attended
Those most whom most the Gods befriended. 280
For they, as in the case of Troy,
Treated such combats as a toy,
And urged them with alternate shock,
As children play at shuttlecock.
At length it happened that the Cranes, 285
Defeated on the open plains,
Were driven, as a last resort,
To occupy a line of fort,
Which, strengthened by the river's course,
Alone could check th' invading force ; 290

So that the Pygmies with a fleet
Would make their conquest quite complete,
And that they had resolved to bring
In action the ensuing spring.

Meanwhile, that gallant little nation 295
Was full of joy and exultation ;
Feasting and balls amused the court,
The populace had meaner sport,
And triumph sparkled in the mien
Of their victorious, youthful Queen. 300

How shall I tell the dreadful fate
That followed such a prosp'rous state ?
Gerana had, as I have said,
Her armies oft to conquest led ;
And though undoubted was her claim 305
To be yclept "a glorious dame,"
She also was, like "good Queen Bess,"
Too vain of fancied charms and dress,
Thus with her gen'als it was seen
That she was biassed by their mien, 310

And, though she made them do their duty,
Most favoured those who praised her beauty.
Thus too her tell-tale looks confessed
She liked the younger courtiers best ;
Neglecting veterans old and surly, 315
Who spoke their mind too free, like Burleigh.

But, to proceed : the Queen one day
On a soft couch reclining lay,
And studied, with a glass before her,
Fresh graces for some new adorer. 320
Around her " maids of honour " stood,
Admiring each new attitude.
They praised the splendour of her charms,
The graceful moulding of her arms,
Her sparkling eyes, her teeth of pearl, 325
The hanging of each petted curl,
The swelling of her ivory breast,
Her waist, her form, and all the rest ;
Until, at length, their adulation
Produced complete intoxication, 330

And the poor Queen exclaimed, "Do you know,

"I think I'm fairer far than Juno;

"And had I, in my beauty's pride,

"Appeared on Ida at her side,

"The Trojan would have judged between us 335

"Much sooner than he did for Venus."

The fatal boast no sooner past

Her lips, than she beheld, aghast,

That Goddess known as not less great

In power to punish than in hate, 340

Who now exclaimed, "Presumptuous worm!

"Who, scarcely human in thy form,

"Dar'st with the Queen of Gods compete,

"Take at my hands a vengeance meet,

"And learn how we of minds divine, 345

"On human punishments refine.

"Nor am I longer now content,

"As formerly, my rage to vent;

"'Twere nought on thy devoted head

"With Jove's own bolt to strike thee dead; 350

“ ’Twere nought to bind thee to a rock
“ And leave thee to the rude waves’ shock ;
“ For to the body are confined
“ Such pains : I now will wound the mind ;
“ And, since thy breast is known to feel 355
“ The throb of patriotic zeal,
“ Thou shalt repent thy boastings vain
“ Beneath the semblance of a Crane,
“ And lead thy foes to overwhelm
“ With ruin thy Pygmæan realm.” 360

As thus she spoke, before her face
The metamorphosis took place,
And the ill-fated quondam Queen,
Impelled by some great force unseen,
Instant on new-formed wings arose, 365
And sought the country of her foes.

Juno herself did not disdain
A visit to the reigning Crane,
And, having promised her support,
Urged him to leave his river-fort 370

And straight attack the Pygmy nation,
Plunged, as it was, in consternation

Who shall oppose, when Gods decide,
The ebb and flow of human tide ?

Not Bacchus' self more rapid way 375

Made where the prostrate Indians lay,
Than did the Cranes, elate with glory
O'er the Pygmæan territory.

And ever that mysterious bird,
By some resistless impulse stirred, 380

Moved in the thickest of the fight,
Where, to the Goddess' great delight,

She overthrew, in wild career,

Her former friends and lovers dear.

Not long th' unequal contest lasted, 385

And when each ling'ring hope was blasted,

The remnant of the Pygmy race,

Scorning surrender as disgrace,

Assembled in their sacred fane,

(Though pious vows had long proved vain,) 390

And there resolving, one and all,
Amidst their household gods to fall,
Soon as they saw that deadly foe
To whom they owed defeat and woe,
Advancing onward from the porch, 395
Fired many a hidden train and torch,
And in one common ruin perished,
With all that they most dearly cherished.

Reader, it scarcely need be said,
That Crane the foremost rank who led, 400
And shared the fallen Pygmies' fate,
Was once the pillar of their state.
And thus, (the same occurred at Troy
From judgment of the shepherd boy,)
That Juno's vengeance might be sated, 405
A nation was annihilated !

What pity that the female breast,
With ev'ry milder virtue blest,

M

Should, when once poisoned by the sting
Which wounded vanity will bring, 410
Beat with revenge beneath the bodice
Alike of mortal and of Goddess !

NOTES.

LINE 1.

*In the vast Æthiopian waste
 By most geographers is placed—
 Pray, ask not how the fact they trace—
 The seat of the Pygmean race.*

Pliny and Strabo both make considerable mention of my fabulous heroes. They do not perhaps quite bear me out in giving the preference, as to their place of residence, to Æthiopia above all other countries: but I require the assistance of the Niger; and as there is some show of authority for my so doing, I hope I may be allowed to establish my Pygmies near its banks.

LINE 23.

*And if there be its truth who doubt,
 Philostratus must bear me out.*

Philostratus, although as an historian he is regarded as a "romancer," is very good authority for a fable; and he mentions the fact of Hercules having been attacked by the Pygmies somewhere in the deserts of Africa.—Icon. 2. c. 22.

LINE 27.

*When Hercules had done to death
Antæus, squeezing out his breath.*

Lucan, *Phar.* lib. iv. beautifully describes the contest between Hercules and Antæus: the former, after various efforts, discovers the means by which the strength of the latter is restored, and exclaims,

——“ ‘ Standum est tibi,’ ——“ et ultra
“ Non credere solo, sternique vetabere terrâ ;
“ Hærebis pressis intra mea pectora membris,
“ Huc Antæe cades.’ Sic fatus, sustulit alte
“ Nitentem in terras juvenem ; morientis in artus
“ Non potuit nati Tellus summittere vires.”

LINE 33.

*As thus insensible he lay,
A Pygmy squadron passed that way.*

Libya, be it understood, is here meant for any part of Africa, and was so used by the ancients. The affair of Hercules with Antæus, according to Lucan, took place near the coast; the goats and rams, therefore, which Pliny informs us were ridden by the Pygmies, must have had a long journey of it; but Philostratus is answerable for all these difficulties

LINE 43.

Alcides by his club was known.

Alcides, like other noble adventurers, had all sorts of equipments bestowed upon him by the Gods; but is seldom represented with any other arms than the brazen club which was given him by Vulcan.

LINE 63.

*Full twenty Pygmies fell around
Slain or ungoated on the ground.*

Pliny, as I have before said, mounts the Pygmies on goats and rams.

LINE 75.

Grasing Alcides' goodly nose.

By "goodly," I mean large. Sterne, in Slawkenbergius' tale, says, that the gentleman who created such a sensation amongst the good wives of Strasburg, "had been to the promontory of noses, and got himself a goodly one."

LINE 159.

*Where the great Niger's waters glide
In most inexplicable tide.*

The source of the Niger was totally unknown to the ancients, and is only guessed at by the moderns.

LINE 223.

*And, manning with divided crews
Of threes and fours these strange canoes.*

The fresco in the "Museo Borbonico," to which I here allude, represents Pygmies in boats of so extraordinary a shape, that it requires no great stretch of imagination to suppose them made of hollow pumpkins: but I have no other authority than my own fancy for the fact.

LINE 275.

*But such attempts are not for me ;
And, humbler than Matinian bee.*

Here, as well as in speaking of "Pindar's flood of song," I, of course, allude to Horace,

"Monte decurrens velut amnis, imbres
"Quem super notas aluere ripas,
"Fervet, immensusque ruit profundo,
"Pindarus ore."

and again farther on,

"Ego apis Matinæ
"More modoque
"Grata carpentis thyma per laborem
"Plurimum, circa nemus uvidique
"Tiburis ripas, operosa parvus
"Carmina fingo."

LINE 279.

In which success by turns attended

Those most whom most the Gods befriended.

Homer, Iliad. lib. iii. seems to say that the Cranes had the advantage in these wars.

Κλαγγῇ τείρεσσι πάντα λα' Ὀϊανῶς ῥέουσιν,
'Αλκείῳ Πυγμαίῳσι φίλον καὶ κῆρα φέρουσιν.

But, according to Pliny, the Pygmies must, at one time, have kept them in check; for he says that their cavalry, mounted on their rams and goats, used to march every spring to destroy the eggs of their enemies; "aliter (as he adds) futuris gregibus non resisti."

LINE 303.

Gerana had, as I have said,

Her armies oft to conquest led.

Gerana was the name of the unhappy Queen of the Pygmies, to whom Ovid thus alludes,

"Altera Pygmææ fatum miserabile matris

"Pars habet; hanc Juno, victam certamine, jussit

"Esse gruem, populisque suis indicere bellum."

LINE 349.

'Twere nought on thy devoted head

With Jove's own bolt to strike thee dead.

Juno alludes to the former punishments of her rivals, in order to show how she now chooses to refine upon them. Semele, owing to her, Juno's, cunning, was destroyed, it is well known, by "Jove's own bolt," though greatly against his will; for he prepared for the fatal embrace, "mœstissimus,"

"immistaque fulgura ventis
 "Addidit, et tonitrus et inevitabile fulmen."—Ovid.

Andromeda's exposure on the rock, as we learn also from Ovid, was in consequence of her mother's having boasted herself fairer than Juno:

"At non invidiis vobis Cepheia virgo est,
 "Pro male formosâ jussa parente mori."

LINE 403.

*The same occurred at Troy
 From judgment of the shepherd boy.*

"Necdum etiam causæ irarum sævique doloris
 "Exciderant animo; manet altâ mente repostum
 "Judicium Paridis spreteque injuria formæ."—Vir. Æn.

And Homer, "passim," attributes the fall of Troy to the same cause.

MELEAGER AND ATALANTE.

How vain are human hopes and fears,
 Since to the distaff, thread, and shears,
 Which three decrepit women wield,
 E'en mighty Jove himself must yield !

Thus thought the heathen world ; and though 5
 Their reputation now is low,
 Althæa thought it quite an honour
 That the three sisters called upon her,
 And, mumbling toast and sipping caudle,
 In friendly gossip deigned to dawdle, 10
 Until Lucina's task was o'er
 And great Ætolia's heir she bore.

E'en with that infant's first faint cry
 Was cast his future destiny ;

N

Already had the youngest crone 15
Who the great distaff calls her own,
Raised it on high above her head
That Lachesis might wind the thread ;
These the observant mother knew
The thread of man's existence drew, 20
Yet, fearing whilst she longed to ask
The issue of their present task,
Spoke not a word, until she saw
Fell Atropos now nearer draw,
And, with her fatal shears in hand, 25
Close to her sisters take her stand.
Then, knowing instant death must wait
Attendant on that eldest Fate,
She wildly cried, " In mercy spare
" A mother's hope, a nation's heir, 30
" And let not Fame with one sole breath
" Proclaim my firstborn's birth and death !"
The hag, in whose time-wrinkled face
"Twere vain to seek for pity's trace,

With most contemptuous look replied ; 85

“ Thou seekest, then, to stem the tide

“ Of destiny, and change the hour

“ O'er which I scarce myself have power.

“ Well, be it so ; for once I can

“ Prolong the wretched life of man ; 40

“ And, since thy prayer was made so soon,

“ From Atropos receive a boon,

“ Which shall hereafter, to thy bane,

“ Prove all thy present suff'ring vain.

“ See'st thou yon burning log ? I 've sworn 45

“ Th' existence of the newly born

“ Shall on that senseless wood depend

“ And with its dying embers end.

“ Secure it and his life will be

“ In his own parent's custody.” 50

Althæa rose, the burning brand

She rescued first with pious hand ;

Unmindful then of threat so rude,

She knelt in sign of gratitude

To Atropos, that thus her son 55

A safe and prosp'rous course must run.

The sisters three, with smiles of scorn,

Then wished the happy Queen "Good morn ;"

And, for the present, so must I,

For once consulting brevity. 60

O'er Meleager's early youth

I also quickly pass ; in truth,

Its hist'ry little yields to say

Except that he was brave and gay,

Excelling much in strength and grace, 65

A very Nimrod in the chase.

In course of time he left his home,

With other noble youths to roam ;

Returning next, an Argonaut

Successfully the foes he fought, 70

Who, at Diana's instigation,

Attacked his father and his nation.

Such facts I just, in passing, mention

To prove him worthy of attention,

That all with int'rest may proceed 75

To hear his last, his fatal deed.

But here, though much I love the chase,

I've not effrontery to face

A line of country ridden o'er

By better mounted man before. 80

Ovid on Pegasus could clear

Each fence that crossed his bold career,

Which if I followed on my back

Would lay me sprawling on my back ;

Whilst classic nose would curl with scorn, 85

And, if not "children yet unborn,"

All those at least who read my lay,

Would rue the hunting of that day.

So, lest I stumble in a grip,

Description of that hunt I skip, 90

In which the great Ætolian scourge

His dying force was seen to urge

'Gainst the best sportsmen of the age,

Who braved with his Diana's rage.

That mighty chase at length was o'er, 95
And slain the Calydonian boar.
The hunter-band, a noble crowd,
Thronged eager round with clamour loud,
And whilst they owned the nervous blow
That laid the savage monster low 100
And freed the country from alarm,
Was dealt by Meleager's arm,
Praised all and each some sep'rate aim,
And to the slighter wounds laid claim,
Whose purple proofs on prostrate foe 105
Seemed tributary streams to flow,
Joining the main ensanguined tide
That bore the life-blood from his side.
But why seems now the sylvan prize
So dear in Meleager's eyes? 110
Is it from vanity alone
The trophy at his feet is thrown,
As though, with hunter's pride, to show
His prowess o'er the grizzly foe?



No, he has other views, for, see ! 115
 He yields it now with bended knee,
 To her whose arrow wounded first
 The monster as from brake he burst,
 Whose active form, throughout the chase,
 His watchful eye has loved to trace 120
 With admiration, yet alarm,
 Lest in rude sport she suffer harm.

And can such trophy, then, impart
 One throb of joy to female heart ?
 Shall lovely woman's hand in blood 125
 Of slaughtered monster be imbrued ?
 Unmaidenly the taste ; and shame
 Must wait on Atalante's name,
 Though crowds of heroes sought her ~~grace~~
 And perished in the fatal race. 130

Like Dian of commanding height,
 In sylvan sports she takes delight ;
 Her light-clad limbs to view unfold
 The symmetry of Nature's mould,

Where, like her prototype divine, 135
Strength, fleetness, beauty, all combine:
Perfect, though masculine, her face,
But where is that retiring grace,
That, shrinking from the stranger's gaze,
Forms woman's best and dearest praise? 140
As foremost now amidst the throng,
To grasp the prize she speeds along,
What does that deep'ning glow bespeak
That sudden rushes to her cheek?
Alas! 'tis exultation's flush, 145
And not that soft yet magic blush
Which, charming him who sees it rise,
Home to man's kindling bosom flies.
But Meleager, it should seem,
Deemed sentiment an empty dream; 150
Since he his vict'ry thus employed in
Making fierce love to such a hoyden.
A breach of taste which, we shall see,
Was its own punishment to be.

When he the chase's highest honour, 155

As a love-gift, had lavished on her,

The rest with envy seemed to burst,

And his own uncle Toxeus first

With loud voice shouted forth his claim,

And, seeking not his rage to tame, 160

Ere she could answer his demand,

Snatched the head rudely from her hand.

Such action's penalty he paid

On earth by impious death-blow laid ;

Plexippus' aid was all too late, 165

He did but share his brother's fate ;

Whilst Meleager sternly stood

With hands in which his kindred's blood

Was strangely mingled with the gore

Of the less savage, slaughtered boar. 170

The tidings of successful sport

Meanwhile had reached Ætolia's court ;

Althæa now in haste was seen,
(That spoke the mother more than Queen,) 175
Forth from the city's gates to run
To welcome her triumphant son.
But, ah ! what horrors did she prove
To wither her maternal love.
As thus she hastened, Rumour's breath
Too truly told her brothers' death, 180
And she beheld on mournful bier
Their murdered forms in proof appear.
Then on the wretched suff'rer's breast
A whirl of madd'ning torments pressed,
As the two feelings chased each other 185
Of pious sister, doting mother ;
At length it was to justice' call
She yielded, though her son must fall.
With looks now pale, now deeply flushed,
She to her secret chamber rushed, 190
And seizing with demoniac air
The brand long kept with pious care,

(Whilst the conviction came too late
How baneful was that gift of Fate,)
She flung it to the greedy flame 195
Which rose to meet it as it came.
But ere that flame could curl around,
The mother sank upon the ground ;
And when, awak'ning to her woes,
With change of purpose she arose, 200
And, stretching forth her trembling hand,
Sought to preserve the fatal brand,
To crumbling ashes it had passed,
Althæa's son had breathed his last !

“ Ne sutor ultra crepidam !” 205
I really beg your pardon, Ma'am,
In the first place, for quoting Latin
To one who walks in silk and satin,
And next, for having dared compare
A cobbler with a lady fair ; 210
But 'tis the truth, howe'er affronting,
You leave your “ *last* ” when you go hunting.

NOTES.

LINE 4.

E'en mighty Jove himself must yield !

In the sixteenth book of the Iliad, Jupiter seeing his own son, Sarpedon, about to be slain by Patroclus, exclaims

Ω μαι ἰγὼν, ὅτι μαι Σαρπηδόνα, φίλτατον ἀνδρῶν,
Μαίε' ἐπὶ Πατρόκλῳ Μινωτιάδῳ δαμῆναι.

and proceeds to consult Juno whether he shall make an attempt to rescue him from his fate. Her reply seems to imply her conviction of the utter uselessness of Jupiter's interference.

Διότ' αὖτις Κρονίδῃ, πᾶσι τὸν μῦθον ἔειπες ;
" Ἄνδρα θεῶν ἰόντα πάλαι σιπρυμίνῃσι
" Ἀψ' Ἰδλίης θανάτῳ δυσσχίῃσι λυαλῶναι ;

And besides the difficulty of the matter, she represents to him that, even if he could rescue his son, it would be a bad precedent, as so many other Gods would wish to do the same for theirs.

LINE 9.

*And, mumbling toast and sipping caudle,
In friendly gossip deigned to dawdle.*

I fear I should search in vain for authorities as to 'caudle;' but I take it for granted that the old gossips, even of those ancient days, were in the habit of indulging in some comfortable cordial on such occasions as that of Althæa's accouchement.

LINE 25.

*And, with her fatal shears in hand,
Close to her sisters take her stand.*

Ovid says that the Fates left Althæa before she had rescued the brand :

“ Quo postquam carmine dicto
“ Excessère Deæ ; flagrantem mater ab igne
“ Eripuit torrem, sparsitque liquentibus undis ;”

but, with all due deference to such authority, I conceive that a mother would not be deterred by their presence from providing for her child's safety. The Fates (like any other ill-natured old women) would “smile with scorn” at the excessive joy of Althæa on receiving a boon which they knew would cause her tenfold misery.

LINE 71.

*Who, at Diana's instigation,
Attacked his father and his nation.*

Before she sent the Calydonian boar to avenge her neglected divinity, Diana had already incited the neighbouring nations against Ceneus.

LINE 87.

*All those at least who read my lay,
Would rue the hunting of that day.*

allude to the old ballad of Chevy Chase :

“ And children yet unborn shall rue
“ The hunting of that day.”

LINE 93.

*'Gainst the best sportsmen of the age,
Who braved with his Diana's rage.*

There never was a nobler “ field ” than that brought together on this memorable occasion. Ovid gives the names of those who composed it, and they comprehend almost all the worthies of the day, except Hercules, who was absent from Calydon in disgrace for having killed a man in a slight quarrel. The Calydonian boar, being the “ *infestæ famulus vindexque Dianæ*,” was assisted and protected by that Goddess throughout the chase. “ *Ferrum Diana volanti abstulerat jaculo.*” Ovid, Met. lib. viii.

LINE 117.

*To her whose arrow wounded first
The monster as from brake he burst.*

Ovid says,

“ Celerem Tegæa sagittam
“ Imposuit nervo, sinuatoque expulit arcu.
“ Fixa sub aure feri summum destrinxit arundo
“ Corpus, et exiguo rubefecit sanguine setas.
“ Nec tamen illa sui successu lætior ictûs,
“ Quam Meleagros erat. Primus vidisse putatur,
“ Et primus sociis visum ostendisse cruorem,
“ Et ‘ meritum ’ dixisse ‘ feres virtutis honorem. ’ ”

LINE 137.

Perfect, though masculine, her face.

Ovid thus describes it,

“ Facies quam dicere verè
“ Virgineam in puero, puerilem in virgine posses.”

The whole description of Atalante indeed answers completely
to that of Diana, even to the hair :

“ Crinis erat simplex, nodum collectus in unum.”

LINE 155.

*When he the chase's highest honour,
As a love gift, had lavished on her.*

In spite of my determination to the contrary, I have here crossed Ovid's "line," as will be seen by any "gentleman sportsman" who will take the trouble to refer to the passage of the 8th Met. beginning

" Illi lætitiæ est cum munere muneris auctor ;
" Invidere alii, totoque erat agmine murmur ;"

but such clashing was unavoidable, as it was necessary to make the catastrophe of my tale depend on Atalante's presence.

LINE 203.

*To crumbling ashes it had passed,
Althæa's son had breathed his last !*

Met. viii.

" Crescunt ignisque dolorque ;
" Languescuntque iterum, simul est extinctus uterque,
" Inque leves abiit paulatim spiritus auras."



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PAMPHILA,

OR THE FATAL TABLETS.

ALTHOUGH so gen'ral is the cry
 'Gainst female curiosity,
 If we would merely change the name,
 We should discover that the same
 Great impulse, in an active mind, 5
 Urges both man and womankind.

It is this feeling which at college
 Is termed a noble thirst for knowledge,
 Bidding the pale-faced student pore
 O'er musty tomes of learned lore. 10

A Newton, list'ning to its call,
 Bade Nature's veil before him fall !

P

Consenting crowds on him confer

The title of Philosopher.

With great Columbus and with Cook 15

The name of enterprise it took.

New arts and new inventions yield

Its vot'ries now a boundless field ;

And we may thank it for the ease

With which we triumph o'er the breeze, 20

And, having, by the powers of steam,

Surpassed the ancient poet's dream,

Envy no more that bag of leather

With which Ulysses ruled the weather.

In short, though we sometimes detect 25

In those of weaker intellect

Its sad abuse, and find them vying

With females in the art of prying,

A thirst for knowledge is the root,

In men, of many a great pursuit : 30

In women 'tis less honoured—why ?

Because we jealously deny

To woman's quick inquiring spirit
 All proper stimulants to stir it ;
 We call her masculine or *blue*, 35
 If she attempts to struggle through
 The trammels o'er her education
 Thrown by us lords of the creation :
 And often an aspiring mind,
 By rig'rous custom, thus confined 40
 To ign'rance, worthy of a Vandal,
 Finds vent in prying and in scandal.
 And female curiosity
 Resembles, in its growth, a tree,
 Which, when we cut its upward shoot, 45
 Still grows luxuriant at the root.

A lady (Pamphila by name)
 Of ancient Rome's patrician grade,
 A comely, gay, and married dame,
 Possessed a *treasure of a maid* ; 50

For none with Mysis could compare
In the great art of dressing hair :
Cosmetics too she understood,
Knew what in ev'ry case was good,
Incipient pimples oft detected, 55
And with the nicest skill corrected,
Removed that redness which the sting
Of envious gnats will often bring,
And, thanks to the judicious touch
She gave her mistress's complexion, 60
Her flatt'ers lied not quite so much,
When they pronounced it all perfection.
The art of Mysis shone no less
In putting on the ancient dress,
Which, void of buckram and "tournure," 65
The modern belle's fictitious lure,
Was made becoming by the taste
With which its ample folds were placed ;
Here some peculiar charm revealing,
And there some slight defect concealing. 70

Besides, this "cleverest of creatures"
 Knew what became each style of features,
 Saving her lady worlds of trouble
 In shopping, (though she charged her double,)
 And when her purchases she brought, 75
 With looks of great importance, home,
 One who had seen her, would have thought
 That she discussed the fate of Rome ;
 For if her dame, with pouting air
 And head averted, dared declare 80
 The girdle did not suit her quite,
 But was a shade too dark or light,
 She scrupled not to contradict her
 Without much show of due decorum,
 Declaring she with pains had picked her 85
 The nicest girdle in the Forum.
 And then to reconcile the matter
 She used the maid's best art—to flatter,
 And readily allowed, "'twas true,
 " Few people could look well in blue ; 90

“ But then her lady’s brilliant charms

“ Exempted her from such alarms ;

“ And authorized her in defying

“ Colours which others found so trying.”

Thus Mysis might be truly said 95

To be a finished lady’s-maid ;

And then, besides these qualities,

Had one her mistress prized no less :

’Twas that of finding fresh supplies

Each morning, at the hour to dress, 100

Of that peculiar style of news

Which never yet had failed t’ amuse

The leisure of the list’ning dame ;

No matter whence the stories came,

No matter who was implicated, 105

Her love of scandal must be sated,

And would have fed on a “ faux pas ”

Told of her own great-grandmamma.

The sequel of my tale will show

Such gossiping oft leads to woe. 110

The lady Pamphila, like most
Who on their dress spend time and cost,
Was fond of showing off her graces
At theatres and public places.

Not so the dull patrician spouse 115

Who had received her marriage vows ;
For Lepidus', that spouse's, pate,
Was full of the affairs of state,
And though his wisdom thought it fit
In the thronged senate oft to sit, 120
Still, hating any other crowd, he
Had rather seen his wife a dowdy,
Than dressed for any gay excursion,
For gaiety was his aversion.

These differing tastes, in man and wife 125

At first occasioned signs of strife
Whenever he declined the honour
Of duteously attending on her ;
For such refusal hurt the pride
Of Pamphila, a recent bride, 130

Who, whether she was blessed or not,
Wished to be envied in her lot,
And therefore sought in face of day
Her lord's devotion to display.
But after some few months of marriage 135
Quite altered was the lady's carriage,
She now no longer teased her lord
To join the parties he abhorred,
And he, well pleased to be relieved
From duty, (pompous fool !) believed 140
His wife more fit than other dames
To visit e'en Circensian games
Free from her husband's scrutiny ;
For pride will banish jealousy,
And Lepidus's self-conceit 145
Might with that modern lord's compete,
Who, married to a lovely creature
With passion glowing in each feature,
Still thought that from mustachio'd phiz
The simple fact of being his, 150

However much he might neglect her,
Was quite sufficient to protect her.
But since 'tis possible to say,
For once, what made a lady change,
I now proceed to name the day 155
When Pamphila began to range
Through all the gaities of Rome,
And leave dull Lepidus at home.

It chanced when once some words had passed,
And the young wife had failed at last 160
To coax her solemn husband out,
That, with a pretty little pout,
Her seat she at the Circus took
And round her cast that sort of look
That says, "I've suffered some vexation 165
And should be glad of consolation."
Such consolation, in good sooth,
She seemed to gather from the youth
Who, though with hesitating air
He had at first approached the fair, 170

Was soon established at her side
In all a favoured gallant's pride.

But who this gallant was 'twere well,
Fair reader, that I now should tell.

Before her marriage, be it known, 175

Miss Pamphila had symptoms shown
Of what is called a taste for flirting,
Encouraging and then deserting

A host of lovers, of whom none
Had ever touched her heart but one. 180

That one was Marcus, now before her,
Who long had been her chief adorer.

But then had come the splendid proffer
Of wealth with Lepidus's offer,

And, spite of Marcus' youth and beauty, 185

Our flirt was taught that filial duty
Should lead her to obey her mother
And all her tender feelings smother.

Such smothered flames again will glow

Whenever well-timed breezes blow. 190

These former lovers had, as yet,
But seldom since her marriage met,
And then, the husband being by,
Had bowed most ceremoniously ;
But chance (which oft assistance lends 195
To Cupid's schemes,) now made amends
For each uninteresting meeting
By timing their embarrassed greeting
Just as the lady's recent pique
Had rendered those defences weak 200
Whose charge is to exclude each guest
Save one, from ev'ry married breast.
'Twould pass my humble skill to paint
The gradual progress from constraint
To the same language that, of old, 205
These lovers had been wont to hold.
At first, as Marcus made his bow,
He stammered forth, he scarce knew how,
Some broken comments on the race,
The crowded Circus, or the weather, 210

Then, bolder grown, he took his place

And talked of scenes they 'd passed together ;

And, though fair Pamphila forbore

In words her marriage to deplore,

Her trembling tones, her long-drawn sighs, 215

The soft expression of her eyes,

Betrayed in language quite as plain

That 'twas a sort of pleasing pain

The recollections now to raise

Of all those former happy days. 220

In fact, the Circus' varied sport

To both appeared extremely short,

Upon that memorable day

When Cupid reassumed his sway

Over a bosom which the smile 225

Of Plutus had seduced awhile.

And when the games were at a close

And they reluctantly arose,

In passing from the seats above,

The aiding and the aided hand, 230

With mutual pressure, told of love
Which prudence scarcely could command.
Ye Gods ! what would not lovers do
If, when such feelings thrill them through,
They could, by magic art, be thrown 235
Sudden on fitting spot, alone !
But servants at the Circus' gate
(For Pamphila was fond of state,)
All further signs of love prevented ;
And of that pomp she now repented 240
Which forced her with more distant air
To thank young Marcus for his care ;
Just adding, as she placed her veil,
That she was seldom known to fail
Her visits to the games to pay 245
On each returning festal day.
Such hint of course was not neglected,
And, as might justly be expected,
Their mutual passion stronger grew
With each repeated interview, 250

And virtue's outworks, one by one,
As such defences oft have done,
Before the young besieger fell,
Until, at length, the citadel
Capitulated, and the hour, 255
 The day and place for its surrender,
Were fixed on by the vanquished power,
 With downcast looks and accents tender.
That culpatory frown is vain,
For tender accents I maintain, 260
Sir Critic, better far become
Than clang of trumpet and of drum,
Those who in am'rous warfare meet
With what can scarce be called defeat.
And since sighs, blushes, youthful charms, 265
With tears and smiles compose the arms,
And dimples are the only scars
Allowed by Cupid in his wars,
It surely would be strange enough
If in his treaties he were rough. 270

But, to resume my broken story,
Our husband had a territory
Near Tibur, at an easy ride
From Rome, in which it was his pride
When, as he said, he 'd time to spare 275
From state affairs, to take the air.
'Twas not that he had aught to do
Or that he liked a country life ;
But Cicero was wont, he knew,
To leave sometimes forensic strife 280
And all the town's severer duties,
To taste awhile of Nature's beauties ;
And he, a would-be statesman, thought
That it, of course, importance brought
To seem like Tully to require 285
The country breezes to respire.
E'en thus in August or September,
Of either House some sleeping member,
Who, in a long protracted session,
Has not been guilty of expression 290

Beyond the simple "ay" or "no,"
With, now and then, a "hear" or so ;
E'en thus, I say, 'mongst country neighbours,
Some wise distributor of franks,
For freedom from St. Stephen's labours 295
His fortune most devoutly thanks.
Well, Pamphila, a certain day,
When thus her lord would be away,
For guilty rendezvous had fixed ;
But, as the proverb says, betwixt 300
The cup and lip there chances oft
Some accident to spoil the draught ;
And Lepidus, provoking man,
That very morning changed his plan.
Our lady's was an awkward plight, 305
For Marcus' coming was quite certain,
Soon as, that friend of lovers, Night,
Should spread her sin-concealing curtain ;
When, 'twas arranged, a gentle knock
Should be her signal to unlock 310

The garden door ; but, oh ! disaster
 Most fell ! her sapient lord and master
 Oft in that garden took delight
 To wander to and fro by night,
 To his unwilling wife relating 315
 The wisdom he was meditating ;
 And if he should the signal hear
 Intended for his lady's ear,
 He would proceed, without a doubt,
 The whole intrigue to puzzle out. 320
 What could be done ? She knew 'twere vain
 To seek abroad to meet her lover,
 For he had promised to remain
 At home, his ev'ning plans to cover.
 Then, as to seeing him at home, 325
 Not e'en degen'rate, modern Rome,
 Though in its morals somewhat loose,
 Allows of any fair excuse
 For ladies, in the face of day,
 Visits to single men to pay ; 330

R

And ancient Rome, it would appear,
Was, in such points, far more severe.
Her only plan was, then, to write ;
But, readers fair, this was not quite
For her so easy as for you, 335
Whose little notes of varied hue
Bring, like their parent rainbow, hope
To lovers in an "envelope :"
For, unlike them, her tablets' size
Might chance to catch her husband's eyes, 340
Who might demand their destination ;
Since, e'en in Pamphila's high station,
'Twas not in those days customary
For any lady's page to carry
Some five-and-twenty notes a day, 345
To say that she had nought to say.
But now th' occasion was too pressing
For farther doubt ; so, calling Mysis,
She told her that, instead of dressing,
She wished to write : such hint suffices 350

For well-trained Abigails ; and though
Mysis extremely longed to know,
She did not ask what caused the change,
But flew the tablets to arrange ;
Then placed a seat and hovered near, 355
With what intent will soon appear.

Advice will nothing now avail
The ancient heroine of my tale ;
But, ladies, let the hint serve you :
Had I been asked, I should have told her 360
"Twas wrong to write a "billet-doux,"
With any one so near her shoulder.

Mysis, (I must digress again,)
To make my story still more plain,
Mysis had wondered much of late 365
To see her mistress' altered state,
And find that she who used of old
To listen to each tale she told,
Would never now attention pay
To any scandal of the day ; 370

But, at the mention of intrigue,
Would either plead extreme fatigue
And hasten quickly to her bed,
To ease, she said, her aching head,
Or silence sullenly impose 375
On all such silly themes as those.

But though, at first, she could not find
A reason suited to her mind,
After a time, our cunning maid
To the right cause these symptoms laid ; 380
Concluding that a person who
Such curiosity had shown
To others' loves to gain the clue,
Must now have secrets of her own,
Whose overpowering interest 385
Sufficed to occupy her breast,
And leave no time or inclination
For such, her former, occupation.
But, having come to this conviction,
Conceive the Abigail's affliction 390

To find her efforts all were vain
Her lady's confidence to gain.
'Twas useless, when she heard her sigh,
To raise a sympathizing eye,
Which said as plain as look could say, 395
" My dearest Ma'am, the only way
" To ease the troubles of your heart,
" Is just those troubles to impart."
For Pamphila would turn aside
Her blushes or her sighs to hide, 400
Or give the handmaid her dismissal
To execute some slight commission.
Her pride and curiosity
Thus piqued at once, made Mysis try
All means the secret to detect, 405
As yet, indeed, without effect ;
But then she knew such secrets must
At length be known, and so the maid
Resolved the mistress' want of trust
Should in the end be dearly paid. 410

With what a thrill, then, of delight
She watched her thoughtless victim write
As follows: " Marcus will believe
" How much his Pamphila must grieve
" To tell him that her hateful spouse 415
" His country journey has deferred ;
" And that the interchange of vows
" Which Cupid should this night have heard,
" Must be postponed until to-morrow,
" When Lepidus, to end our sorrow, 420
" Will, without fail, at break of day,
" For Tibur take his wonted way.
" I tremble lest these tablets fail
" As timely warning to avail ;
" Write then, I beg, some brief reply 425
" That I may know tranquillity.
" Adieu ! what now seems adverse chance
" The joys of meeting will enhance,
" When we, at length, our vows renew.
" Adieu ! a thousand times adieu !" 430



A slave was summoned to receive
The fatal tablets from her hand,
When, thinking that she could perceive
Mysis in list'ning posture stand,
Her mistress bade her leave the room, 435
A simple act which sealed her doom,
Destroying quite each kinder feeling
Which might prevent a maid's revealing
To him most injured by the fact
Her lady's meditated act. 440

Th' indignant Mysis sought her lord
With proofs so damning to afford,
That even he, who scarce believed
That he could ever be deceived,
Or that his wife with his could dare 445
Another's merit to compare,
Was forced to yield a faith implicit
To circumstances so explicit.

In Lepidus what feeling now
Has prompted that vindictive vow? 450

'Tis pride and injured pride alone,
For jealousy must needs disown
A cold and calculating breast
Where love has never been a guest.

See ! he the trembling slave forgives ; 455
But, mark the terms on which he lives !—
His treachery must lend its aid
To the deep scheme of vengeance laid.

The unconscious wife could scarcely fail
With joy that messenger to hail 460
When he, with signs of secrecy,
Gave, as from Marcus, this reply.

“ Dearest ! these hasty words I write
“ To free thy bosom from alarms :
“ I yield to adverse fate to-night ; 465
“ To-morrow thou shalt bless mine arms !”

Her load of apprehension gone,
The world around more brightly shone
For Pamphila, nor did she mark
Aught more than usually dark 470

On Lepidus' contracted brow
Which often bore such looks as now ;
For in th' habitual expression
Of those who make a great profession
Of consequence or information 475
Beyond their real wit or station,
'Tis hard to tell, from brow and eyes,
If they would angry look, or wise,
Her "billet-doux's" supposed success
Inspired in Pamphila no less 480
A thrill of self-congratulation
When came the looked-for invitation,
To join her husband's ev'ning walk
And listen to his solemn talk.
'Twas no slight task for Lepidus 485
In wonted manner to discuss
His pompous nothings, whilst his soul
Of vengeance felt the dire control.
But vain indeed was all his fear
That his changed manner should appear, 490

For to such themes his youthful wife
 Ne'er paid attention in her life :
 And if she now remarked his voice,
 'Twas, for a moment, to rejoice
 That the same overhanging boughs 495
 Would, with the morrow's happier eve,
 The echo of her Marcus' vows,
 Instead of that dull voice, receive.

At length, as though some train of thought
 The fact had to his mem'ry brought, 500
 Her husband suddenly exclaimed,
 " I ought indeed to be ashamed
 " Of having quite forgot, my dear,
 " To say that Crassus will be here
 " To sup with us this very night ; 505
 " Since, I am sure, 'tis with delight
 " You hear so sage a senator
 " Discussing the affairs of Rome ;
 " So pri'thee listen at that door,
 " 'Tis past the hour when he should come, 510

“ And I requested him, if late,
“ To enter by the garden gate.
“ Hark ! now, methinks, I hear him knock :
“ Do, hasten to withdraw the lock.”

Another thrill of joy then came 515
Across the bosom of the dame,
As she the bolt obedient drew ;
Joy, that her husband little knew
What an unwelcome guest he might
Have thus commanded to his sight, 520
Bidding his guilty wife discover,
In Crassus’ place, her youthful lover.

But, as the portal open flies,
Great Gods ! what form now meets her eyes ?
’Tis Marcus’ self ! a moment’s space 525
He folds her in his close embrace ;
A moment, for before her cry
Can warn him of a danger nigh,
A well-directed, vengeful blow
Has laid the hapless lovers low, 530

And Lepidus, with stern delight,
Is gazing on the bloody sight.

Ladies, with secrets to conceal,
Encourage not your maids to prattle ;
You sharpen for yourselves the steel, 535
For those must pry who tittle-tattle.

NOTES.

LINE 51.

*For none with Mysis could compare
In the great art of dressing hair.*

Ovid, who is great authority in all such matters, alludes frequently to the art of dressing hair as being of the very greatest importance. He thus praises Nape, a lady's-maid, for her skill in that particular :

“ Colligere incertos, et in ordine ponere crines
“ Docta, neque ancillas inter habenda, Nape.”

LINE 53.

Cosmetics too she understood.

In a short fragment called “*Medicamina faciei*,” Ovid gives different receipts for cosmetics, and puffs them like a modern advertiser :

“ Quæcumque adficiet tali medicamine vultum,
“ Fulgebit speculo levior ipsa suo ;”

and again, he recommends another for spots and blotches :

“ Addita de querulo volucrum medicamina nido
 “ Ore fugant maculas : Halcyonea vocant.”

LINE 59.

*And, thanks to the judicious touch
 She gave her mistress's complexion.*

The third book, “De arte amandi,” contains the most minute instructions for ladies' toilets. Apropos to their painting Ovid says :

“ Scitis et inductâ candorem querere cerâ,
 “ Sanguine quæ vero non rubet, arte rubet.”

He also most judiciously recommends that paint should be laid on sparingly :

“ Non tamen expositas mensâ deprendat amator
 “ Pyxidas, ars faciem dissimulata juvat.
 “ Quem non offeudat toto fæx illita vultu,
 “ Cum fluit in tepidos pondere lapsa sinus !”

LINE 63.

*The art of Mysis shone no less
 In putting on the ancient dress,
 Which, void of buckram and tournure.*

Ovid is so minute in his account of the little aids of art to which the Roman ladies resorted to adorn their persons, that,

had there been any such article as a "tournure" in use, he would undoubtedly have mentioned it. He admonishes the ladies to study their figures, and to make the most of them by the judicious disposal of their dress :

" Quæ nimium gracilis pleno velamina filo

" Sumat, et ex humeris laxus amictus eat;"

and again:

" Conveniunt tennes scapulis analectides altis,

" Inflatum circa fascia pectus eat."

This sounds very much like a pair of stays; but I do not think any mention can be found of aught resembling that abominable falsehood, "a bustle."

LINE 79.

For if her dame, with pouting air

And head averted, dared declare

The girdle did not suit her quite,

But was a shade too dark or light.

The figures represented in the fresco to which these lines allude, are Grecian, and my story is Roman; but that is not the only anomaly of which I am here guilty: for the learned give a very different account of the painting, and say that its subject is either Phædra and her nurse, Penelope and her servant, or some other person receiving very serious advice. The object under the arm of the standing figure is, at all

events, a band or girdle, and I take the liberty of supposing that person to be in the act of discussing its merits. Is not dress sometimes a very serious subject with the fair sex? Girdles were worn by the Roman ladies, as we learn from divers authorities. Martial wrote an epigram on one belonging, I should suppose, to a lady of somewhat doubtful virtue :

“ Longa satis nunc sum ; dulci sed pondere venter

“ Si tumeat, fiam tunc tibi zona brevis.”

With respect to the choice of colours for the various parts of the dress, Ovid says :

“ Quot nova terra parit flores, cùm, vere tepenti,

“ Vitis agit gemmas, pigraque cedit hiems,

“ Lana tot aut plures succos bibit ; elige certos,

“ Nam non conveniens omnibus omnis erit.”

LINE 119.

And though his wisdom thought it fit

In the thronged senate oft to sit.

The senate was convened in various places ; often in temples, such as that of Jupiter Stator, Apollo, Mars, &c. &c. These temples, if we may judge by those which remain, were not very large ; and as, in the time of Julius Cæsar, the senate consisted of one thousand members, and it required at least four hundred to “ make a house,” there must have been considerable crowding on any great occasion.

LINE 142.

*To visit e'en Circensian games,
Free from her husband's scrutiny.*

Ovid pitches upon the "Circus maximus" as the place best calculated for the commencement and conducting of an intrigue, in his 2nd El. of the 3rd Amorum, beginning,

" Non ego mobilium sedeo studiosus equorum ;
" Cui tamen ipsa faves, vincat ut ille precor :
" Ut loquerer tecum veni, tecumque sederem
" Ne tibi non notus, quem facis, esset amor."

He then goes on to describe the numerous "petits soins" which may there be brought into play.

LINE 272.

*Our husband had a territory
Near Tibur.*

Tibur and its neighbourhood abounded in villas, in ancient as in modern days. Horace thus classes it with two other favourite places of resort :

" Seu mihi frigidum
" Præneste, seu Tibur supinum,
" Seu liquidæ placuere Baiæ."

T

That poet had himself a villa in or near the town, to which he made constant excursions :

“ Romæ Tibur amem ventosus, Tibure Romam.”

LINE 279.

*But Cicero was wont, he knew,
To leave sometimes forensic strife.*

If we were to credit those modern pests who degrade the name of Rome's great orator, Cicero must have had a villa in almost every town in Italy. We know from his own writings that he had several, some of which he describes with great pomposity.

LINE 339.

*For, unlike them, her tablets' size
Might chance to catch her husband's eyes.*

The waxen tablets on which familiar notes were written must have been of considerable size, for it seems, from the following passage in Ovid, Am. lib. 1. El. xii. that the wax was spread on wood :

“ Ite hinc difficiles, funebria ligna, tabellæ,
“ Tuque negaturis cera referta notis.”

LINE 360.

*Had I been asked, I should have told her
'Twas wrong to write a "billet-doux,"
With any one so near her shoulder.*

There is no disputing the nature of the expression of the second figure in the annexed fresco; her countenance betrays a most decided feeling of female curiosity in a high state of excitement.



Fig. 1. The same.

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BACCHUS AND ÆSCULAPIUS.

Now at the midnight revel seen,
 And now in field of battle gory,
 Great Bacchus wavered much between
 His love of wine and love of glory.
 He was the first to introduce 5
 'Mongst Gods and men, the purple juice,
 And, in the laudable intention
 Of honouring his own invention,
 (The fate of mortals oft is such,)
 Was apt to take a cup too much. 10
 In time this habit of excess
 Arrived at downright drunkenness,
 And now and then the God was found
 A senseless lump upon the ground,

Where it was passing strange to see 15
So great a conqueror as he,
Without the semblance of a blow,
So ignominiously laid low
E'en by the cups himself had plied,
Like any other suicide. 20

Such scenes failed not to scandalize
Some of the squeamish Deities ;
And Bacchus, to his shame and sorrow,
Once on a drunken revel's morrow,
With trembling knees and aching head 25
Before his angry father led,
Was, in full council, sharply rated
For having, when intoxicated,
Shocked the fastidious Dian's ear
By ribald jest and mocking jeer. 30

Of course, what Jove declared was wrong
Was censured by th' obsequious throng
Of minor Deities, and, though
There's good authority to show



engraved by J. G. Thompson

That many had been seen to share 35

The joys of Bacchanalian fare,

They all, to wound the culprit's pride,

Their presence at his feasts denied.

'Twas thus "the jolly God of Wine,"

Unused in solitude to pine, 40

Was forced, as well as he was able,

With meaner guests to fill his table.

And, as Silenus was his "vice,"

His parties were not over nice,

For dancing Faun and grinning Satyr 45

There reeled amidst the drunken clatter,

With red-haired, ivy-crowned Bacchante,

In girdle loose and garments scanty.

But, whilst the great Olympic court

With due disgust beheld such sport, 50

One of their number with delight

Marked the delinquent's fev'rish plight,

Expecting very soon to gain

Some profit by the drunkard's pain.

That one was Æsculapius, 55
Who, though with mighty pains and fuss
His high diploma he had taken,
By patients sadly was forsaken.
'Tis true, he had Jove's leave to practise,
But, hitherto, the real fact is 60
That Gods above had scarce a notion
Of benefit from pill or potion.
Though now his eager expectation
Of profit in his grave vocation,
Thanks to this system of excess, 65
Was very soon to find success.
Bacchus, one morning, after more
Than usual wine the night before,
With staring eyes and visage haggard,
Walked early forth, or rather staggered, 70
To court the all-refreshing breeze
Amidst a fav'rite grove of trees.
In ev'ry former drunken case
He had been able, thus, to chase

The floating vapours of the wine 75

And reassume his look divine,

In time to join the courtly bevy

That waited at the Thund'rer's levée.

But now such efforts all were vain,

Each moment added to his pain ; 80

His staring eyeballs round and round

Revolved and still no object found,

And, clinging to a friendly beech,

He stammered, " Would I had a leech !"

The Doctor God who hovered near, 85

Failed not that instant to appear ;

And Bacchus, taken at his word,

By art consenting to be cured,

Was thus, to ease his aching head,

The first immortal ever bled ! 90

A night consumed in revelry

Will oft entail a morning fee.

U

NOTES.

LINE 5.

*He was the first to introduce
'Mongst Gods and men, the purple juice.*

Some say that Bacchus was not the inventor of the use of the grape; but I have at least Virgil's authority on my side, who says, Geor. i.

“ Vos, o clarissima mundi
“ Lumina, labentem cœlo quæ ducitis annum,
“ Liber et alma Ceres, vestro si munere tellus
“ Chaoniam pingui glandem mutavit arista
“ Poculaque inventis Acheloia miscuit uvis.”

LINE 45.

*For dancing Faun and grinning Satyr
There reeled amidst the drunken clatter,
With red-haired, ivy-crowned Bacchante,
In girdle loose and garments scanty.*

There are almost as many frescos as written authorities illustrative of the sort of company Bacchus was, sometimes, in the habit of keeping. Horace says,

" Bacchum in remotis carmina rupibus
 " Vidi docentem, credite posteri,
 " Nymphasque discentes, et aures
 " Capripedum Satyrorum acutas."

And Ovid, *Fast.* lib. iii. v. 730, says,

" Ibat arenoso Satyris comitatus ab Hebro."

And farther on,

" Fœmineos thyrsos concitat ille choros."

In his *Met.* lib. iv. addressing Bacchus, he says,

" Tu bijugum pictis insignia frænis
 " Colla premis lyncum : Bacchæ Satyrique sequuntur,
 " Quique senex ferulâ titubantes ebrius artus
 " Sustinet."

LINE 58.

By patients sadly was forsaken.

I, of course, only allude to his celestial practice; since, when on earth, he had pursued his calling with so much success that Pluto complained to Jupiter of the depopulation of the infernal regions; and the latter, at his brother's instigation, struck the successful doctor dead with lightning. Pluto would scarcely make a similar complaint of "the faculty" of the present day; which learned body, like the anger of Achilles, sends many a soul to hell before its time. *Æsculapius* was afterwards made a God and pardoned, it would seem, by Jupiter, since Ovid speaks of their respective temples as being situated near each other:

" Accepit Phœbo Nymphâque Coronide natum .

" Insula, dividuâ quam premit amnis aquâ :

" Jupiter in parte est, cepit locus unus utrumque,

" Junctaque sunt magno templa nepotis avo."

Virgil, *Æn.* lib. vii. v. 773, says, that, enraged at seeing Hippolytus restored to life, Jupiter

" Ipse repertorem medicinæ talis et artis

" Fulmine Phœbigenam Stygias detrussit ad undas."

LINE 83.

And, clinging to a friendly beech,

He stammered, " Would I had a leech !"

The preceding fable was suggested by my recollection of a painting in the house of Meleager at Pompeii, which recollection I have subsequently discovered to have been erroneous in two very material points. In the first place, it is a pillar, not a tree, which supports the leaning figure; and, in the second place, the figure itself, instead of being that of a drunken Bacchus, represents a Bacchante. Thus the whole idea of my fable, as far as it depends upon the wall, falls to the ground; but as authorities written, drawn, and sculptured, are never wanting for the debaucheries of the God of wine, I have, though unsupported by the Pompeian artist, taken the liberty with Bacchus and mythology, of supposing him to have been the first of the Gods who became the patient of *Æsculapius*.

FLORA.

'Twas in the genial month of May,
 Just at the witching fall of day,
 When, in the deeper, warmer glow
 That Phœbus' setting beams bestow,
 His wish to linger we may trace, 5
 Like parting lovers' last embrace :
 'Twas also in a fertile land
 Which seemed to own her influence bland,
 That lovely Flora left her bower
 To seek that modest ev'ning flower 10
 Which, she well knew, would open soon
 Those beauties to the silv'ry moon
 That, wrapt in close concealment, lay
 During the glaring light of day :

E'en as some maidens veil their blaze 15
Of beauty from the common gaze ;
But all their charms and warmth discover,
In secret, to some favoured lover.

As Flora trod the verdant plain
In haste the Ceres to obtain, 20
The balmy breath of ev'ning's breeze
That rustled in the yielding trees,
Caught her light garments, and their swell,
To fertile Fancy's eye, might well
Appear to lend its ready aid 25
To the swift motion of the maid ;
Whilst she, by such gay sail propelled,
Seemed, as her airy course she held,
The loveliest bark that e'er was seen
To skim a mimic ocean's green. 30

But little thought the light-clad fair
To whom she owed such fav'ring air ;
Else had she, doubtless, felt alarm
As, in her flight, each youthful charm

Was bared before th' impassioned gaze 35
 Of one who, though unseen, could raise,
 Assisted by his subject gale,
 Her envious drap'ry's floating veil.

'Twas Zephyr's self, the pride of all
 The dwellers in Æolian hall, 40
 Who now, thus secretly, pursued
 A nymph whom he had vainly wooed,
 Whenever in the spangled mead
 He 'd sought his am'rous cause to plead ;
 Since there it pleased her more to rove 45
 And cull the treasures newly sprung,
 Than listen to a tale of love
 Though by immortal suitor sung.

For Flora, being young and coy,
 As yet knew nothing of the joy 50
 The tender passion can bestow
 On those who once have felt its glow ;
 And, hitherto, her virgin breast
 By garlands only had been pressed ;

Although by nature formed to prove 55
The warm yet marble shrine of love.
Thus beauty's gifts are oft disgraced
Or ignorantly thrown to waste,
And I have seen a fair one kiss
Some pet, unconscious of its bliss, 60
With lips whose touch to me had given
The Moslem's promised joys of heaven.

Mean time the nymph her rapid course
Directed to a streamlet's source,
Where, as its limpid fount she neared, 65
Behold ! the Cerus plant appeared ;
Displayed as though before her eyes,
Acknowledging her sov'reign power,
It sought to spread, in duteous guise,
The cherished beauties of its flower. 70
Such homage Flora, with delight,
Hailed as the off'ring of the night,
And seizing on the prize, in haste
Its dew-distilling blossoms placed,



Where with the sweets of day they vied, 75
Her fragrant garland's latest pride.

Thus simply, gracefully employed,
Beauty, of ornament devoid,
More surely strikes than when arrayed
In pomp of art, with gems displayed. 80

And Zephyr, as with pinion light
He hovered near the maiden bright,
Now felt that e'en an humble flower,
Adjusted by her lovely hand,
Had o'er his feelings greater power 85
Than Juno's sceptre could command.

When, therefore, on a mossy bank
O'erhung by myrtle bower she sank,
He sought some method to devise
To bid her latent passion rise, 90

By former failure being taught
That she was only to be caught
By being at some moment wooed
When predisposed to loving mood.

And now upon her breast of snow 95
He bade his gentlest breezes blow,
Charged highly with the rich perfume
Of the surrounding myrtle bloom.

Full oft has such a balmy breath
(Although not Upas-like, with death,) 100
Been found with danger to be laden
To the strict virtue of a maiden ;
For with its faint, though fragrant smell,
It seconds Cupid's arrows well ;
And just that lassitude produces 105
Which girdles first, then morals looses.

'Twas thus a soft, an unknown feeling,
O'er Flora's languid senses stealing,
Caused her to heave the frequent sigh
And feel oppressed she knew not why. 110
But he, the wily Zephyr, knew,
Who, veiled as yet from Flora's sight,
Was watching, as he nearer drew,
Such growing languor with delight.

Nor was his triumph long delayed ;

115

For, now, as the unconscious maid,

In vain by change of posture tried

To ease her palpitating breast,

The hand that, as she turned aside,

Seemed listless on the turf to rest,

120

Sudden a gentle pressure felt,

And, lo ! before her eyes, there knelt

A youth whose passion scarce could fail

At such a moment to prevail.

For he whose breath could charm the sense,

125

Breathed also love's soft eloquence ;

And, since the startled Flora's brows

No longer darkened at his vows,

When now his passion, gaining strength,

Emboldened him to add, at length,

130

To mild persuasion, gentle force,

He gained the wished-for boon, of course.

I say, of course, for maids or wives

Who have been virtuous all their lives,

But, by some luckless chance, discover, 135
Like Flora, such an ardent lover,
At such befitting time and place
Brought suddenly before their face,
If urged by secret inclination,
Seldom resist the strong temptation. 140

But peccadillos which, at night,
Give yielding maidens great delight,
Alas ! are often, on the morrow,
Productive of repentant sorrow.
Well, then, might Flora weep forlorn 145
When Zephyr, with the coming morn,
Took, from her side, his rapid way
To visit other climes by day.
For, though he promised that, at eve,
His charmer should again receive, 150
Beneath the conscious myrtle boughs,
A repetition of his vows,
Still, through the hours that as they passed
Seemed each more tedious than the last,

The nymph, no longer innocent, 155
 Was left her errors to repent.
 But, whilst her tears in torrents fell,
 He must have known the sex full well
 Who durst declare if most she grieved
 At having been to sin deceived, 160
 Or if her present cause of pain
 Rose from the wish to sin again.

Whiche'er the case, her stormy grief
 In mode so boist'rous found relief,
 That Zephyr's brother, Boreas, 165
 Heard, as he chanced that way to pass,
 (Spite of the noise his breezes made,)
 Such words as "innocence betrayed,"
 And "force 'gainst helpless virgin used,"
 And "virtue lost," and "love abused," 170
 Mingled with which complaints there came
 The gay deceiver's well-known name.

Now had the fault been any other's
 Instead of his own younger brother's,

It would not have appeared so great, 175
And Flora might have wept her fate,
Nor found so complaisant and kind
The ruler of the northern wind.
But Gods and men, on such occasions,
Are fond of blaming their relations, 180
Holding no privilege so dear
As that which bids them interfere ;
And, to this impulse, must be laid
The promise now by Boreas made,
When, though well known for manners rude, 185
And seldom in a melting mood,
He seemed to pity Flora's case
And, straightway, stood before her face
With looks the most composed and bland
His blust'ring nature could command ; 190
And, with a softened voice and air,
Thus hastened to address the fair ;
“ Cease, injured Flora, to complain,
“ All farther signs of grief were vain,

" Since they already touch his heart 195
" Who can the promptest aid impart.
" Learn, then, that Boreas stands before you,
" And will to happiness restore you ;
" For Zephyr who has caused your tears,
" In me an elder brother fears ; 200
" And since it seems he proffered vows,
" I swear that he shall be your spouse,
" And make the matter up with marriage,
" That none your fame may e'er disparage."

As Boreas spoke, with glad surprise 205
Poor Flora raised her weeping eyes ;
But ere with thanks she could reply,
Swifter than thought, her new ally
By his own stormy breeze propelled,
His course to Tempe's valley held, 210
And found his brother there disporting,
And in the very act of courting
Another nymph, to whom he plighted
The self-same vows so lately slighted.

Now, though those simple words "you must" 215
Are very apt to breed disgust,
And Zephyr, it may be supposed,
Was not by any means disposed
To be compelled to take a wife,
Still, knowing, in the threatened strife, 220
That all his efforts needs must fail
Against his brother's stronger gale,
He thought it best, in such a case,
To yield the matter with good grace,
And therefore, cunningly, pretended 225
That having all along intended
Flora that very night to wed,
He merely had to Tempe sped
Amidst its damsels to provide
Some fit attendants for his bride. 230

Though Boreas not one word believed
Of Zephyr's palpable invention,
He wisely feigned himself deceived
And praised such delicate attention.

'Twere wrong, he said, that wedded bliss 235
Should be withheld from love like his,
And swore that very night should be
The first of his felicity.

The thing resolved, no time was lost,
For weddings then slight trouble cost ; 240
No cunning harpies of the law
Were paid the settlements to draw,
No priestly services were read
When Zephyr was to Flora wed,
But Cupid gave the nymph away, 245
With an arch smile, to Hymen's sway ;
(Conscious that e'en the Gods above
When married often ceased to love ;)
And Hymen, pleased with present power,
Thought little of the future hour, 250
But joyous waved his torch on high
The mystic rite to sanctify ;
Whilst nymphs, in chorus, filled the air
With praises of the happy pair.

And happy, for the time at least, 255
They seemed to those who graced the feast ;
For Zephyr, who again was fired
By seeing Flora much admired,
Proud that the beauty of the hour
Was destined for his nuptial bower, 260
Seemed to look forward with delight
To the approaching joys of night,
And with a glance of passion eyed
The lovely creature at his side ;
Whilst she, who only knew too well 265
The tale such glance was meant to tell,
Beneath the bridegroom's kindling eye
Blushed with such seeming modesty,
That most of those who saw th' effect,
The cause unable to suspect, 270
Gave, knowing nothing of her story,
To virgin innocence the glory.
Not so the youthful God of day ;
He, with that penetrating ray

Which Mars and Venus found, of old, 275
Was apt such secrets to unfold,
Was soon enabled to discover
That Flora, as a yielding lover,
Already had those transports known
Which should be felt by wives alone ; 280
And, arguing thence that as a wife,
When somewhat tired of married life,
She was not likely to repel
Another's suit, if pleaded well,
He marked her as an easy prey 285.
For conquest on some future day.

Some say 'tis quite unfair to bound
All married joys to one short round
Of that mysterious orb of night
Whose very rays of doubtful light 290
Seem inspirations from above
Prompting the world below to love :
Yet one who with the infant moon
First tastes of love's long wished for boon,

And finds the pleasure of the feast 295
E'en with the crescent's self increased ;
If, by sad chance, the full now passed,
His former ardour does not last,
And he, in manner grown less kind,
His wife's too frequent passion scorns, 300
May, haply, to his sorrow, find
Fit emblems in the waning horns.

Zephyr who, restless as the gale
Which loves to range from hill to dale,
Had ever led a roving life, 305
Was not long constant to his wife ;
But, ere the honeymoon was spent,
Again his course to Tempe bent,
In search of her from whom his brother
Had borne him off to wed another. 310

No sooner was the husband flown
And Flora left to mope alone,
Than Phœbus took his hurried way,
Although long past the usual hour,

As if his compliments to pay 315

To the young couple in their bower.

“ Great Jove !” he cried, with feigned surprise,

“ Can I, indeed, believe my eyes ;

“ And is the lord of such a treasure

“ One moment absent, when both pleasure 320

“ And duty here at once combine

“ To make his nuptial bower divine ?

“ By Styx I swear, that, were those charms

“ Once placed within my longing arms,

“ And were I called from them away 325

“ To take my empire o’er the day,

“ The world might blunder on in night

“ Ere I would mount the car of light !”

’Tis but too true, that words like these

Are found sometimes the fair to please ; 330.

And Flora’s eye, as then she listened,

With vanity delighted glistened

Too brightly to be duly hid

By modesty’s descending lid.

Apollo, practised as a rake, 335
Such symptom could not well mistake,
But, from that moment, 'twas his care
No pains or flattery to spare,
And soon, which proved his judgment great,
By seeking to anticipate 340
(Before her lips could make them known)
Her wishes, he obtained his own.
And, now, in varied joys each hour
Was passed in Flora's myrtle bower ;
Love which had soon with Zephyr ceased, 345
With Phoebus seemed by time increased ;
For he, with feelings more refined,
Called to his aid the charms of mind.
When passion's fiercer glow was past
And she those languid glances cast 350
That tell of satisfied desire,
The God would take his gifted lyre,
And, with poetic strains, awhile
The intervals of love beguile :

Whilst Flora, as he sung, would twine 355
Fresh chaplets for his brows divine.

Such occupation scarce allows
One moment's thought of absent spouse ;
And as the pair in loving guise
Changed flowers for kisses, songs for sighs, 360

It chanced that Zephyr, once returning,
Just as their guilty love was burning,
Broke in, most unexpectedly,
Upon his lady's privacy,
And saw—saw what?—'tis not my task 365

To tell, nor yours, fair dames, to ask :
Suffice to say, enough he saw
To prove, in any court of law,
That he was one of that vile race
Who on their foreheads bear disgrace. 370

'Twas now that Zephyr stormed and swore,
(Such breeze he never raised before,)
And threatened, in the courts above,
To lay such serious information

As should induce the mighty Jove 375
To grant an instant separation.

Flora, meantime, though fairly caught,
With woman's wonted quickness, thought
'Twas quite as well, at any rate,
To show she could recriminate ; 380
And, caring little for detection,
With this, and Phœbus as protection,
She, from adulterous embrace,
Uprising with a crimsoned face,
Thus, like an injured wife, gave loose 385
To matrimonial abuse.

" And did you, libertine, expect
" That I would tamely bear neglect,
" And waste in solitude my charms,
" That you might revel in the arms 390
" Of all the Nymphs of vale and mountain
" And ev'ry Naiad of the fountain ?
" No, Zephyr, no ; let other wives
" Whose husbands lead such wanton lives,

“ Consume with useless sighs and tears 395
“ The freshness of their youthful years,
“ Such wrongs my spirit soars above ;
“ I ’ve tasted and I will have love.
“ And since you chose to quench your flame
“ Before you had a husband’s claim, 400
“ But, now that we are duly wed,
“ Prove so inconstant to my bed,
“ I, simply, your example follow,
“ And look for comfort to Apollo.”

Ye who would keep your wives from raking 405
 And constant to the nuptial bed,
Give no bad precedent by taking
 A husband’s rights before you wed.

NOTES.

LINE 7.

*'Twas also in a fertile land
Which seemed to own her influence bland.*

The place and time of year in which Zephyr offered violence to Flora, are pointed out by Ovid :

“ Chloris eram quæ Flora vocor, corrupta Latino
“ Nominis est nostri litera Græca sono.
“ Chloris eram Nymphe campi felicitis, ubi audis
“ Rem fortunatis ante fuisse viris.
“ Quæ fuerat mihi forma grave est narrare modestæ ;
“ Sed generum matri reperit illa Deum.
“ Ver erat ; errabam, Zephyrus conspexit ; abibam,
“ Insequitur ; fugio, fortior ille fuit.”

The rest of the story I have altered to suit my fable and the very lover-like terms on which, in the latter of the sub-joined frescos, Apollo appears to be with Flora. It seems she was only a Nymph before her marriage.

LINE 10.

To seek that modest ev'ning flower.

Ife ar my description of the “ Night-blooming Cerus ” will be found anything but correct by botanists ; but, as the idea

I have of the plant suits my present purpose, I have abstained from searching for more accurate information as to its nature.

LINE 39.

*'Twas Zephyr's self, the pride of all
The dwellers in Æolian hall.*

Æolus, as Homer informs us in the second book of the *Odyssey*, was made commander of all the winds by Jupiter ; and Virgil, *Æn. lib. i.* gives him the Æolian islands for his abode :

" Hic vasto Rex Æolus antro
" Luctantes ventos, tempestatesque sonoras
" Imperio premit, ac vinclis et carcere frænât."

Neptune, in the same book of the *Æneid*, speaking of that abode, calls it a " hall :"

" Illâ se jactet in aulâ
" Æolus, et clauso ventorum carcere regnet."

LINE 77.

*Thus simply, gracefully employed,
Beauty, of ornament devoid.*

Beauty is "when unadorned adorned the most," says Thomson ; but one can scarcely be accused of plagiarism for repeating a truth so obvious.

LINE 99.

*Full oft has such a balmy breath
(Although not Upas-like, with death).*

The power of scents over the senses will not be disputed by those who have resided in hot climates. Lucretius evidently thought that the breath of Zephyr had some love-inspiring principle, for he makes him the messenger of Venus :

“ It ver, et Venus, et Veneris prænuntius ante
“ Pennatus graditur Zephyrus vestigia propter.”

LINE 179.

*But Gods and men, on such occasions,
Are fond of blaming their relations.*

The interference of Boreas on this occasion must appear a little inconsistent with the fact of his having himself carried away Orythia. Ovid, indeed, mentions this very circumstance as an excuse or precedent for his brother Zephyr :

“ Et dederat fratri Boreas jus omne rapinæ,
“ Ausus Erectheâ præmia ferre domo.”

But then Boreas had already made an honest woman of Orythia : and why should he not, finding himself married, have wished, like the fox without a tail in Æsop's fable, to get his brother into the same scrape ? Ovid tells us that Boreas, in his own case, tried fair means first :

" Dilectâque diu caruit Deus Orythiâ,
 " Dum rogat, et precibus mavult quam viribus uti.
 " Ast ubi blanditiis agitur nihil, horridus irâ,
 " Quæ solita est illi nimiumque domestica vento."

Since, then, this rough gentleman appears to have had some sense of honour, I do not think his interference with his younger brother so very unnatural.

LINE 239.

*The thing resolved, no time was lost,
 For weddings then slight trouble cost.*

That the preparations necessary for marriages, provided Hymen was present, were not very troublesome amongst the Gods, we may infer from the off-hand speech of Juno on the subject of the union of Dido and Æneas. She says she will take care that they shall find themselves in the same cave; and simply adds,

" Adero, et tua si mihi certa voluntas,
 " Connubio jungam stabili, propriamque dicabo.
 " Hic Hymenæus erit.—Virgil. *Æn.*

The event takes place accordingly:

" Speluncam Dido, Dux et Trojanus, eandem
 " Deveniunt. Prima et Tellus, et pronuba Juno
 " Dant signum; fulsere ignes, et conscius æther
 " Connubii, summoque ululârunt vertice Nymphæ."

LINE 273.

Not so the youthful God of day.

Ovid, Met. lib. iv. gives the story of Mars and Venus ; and says of our friend Apollo,

“ Primus adulterium Veneris cum Marte putatur

“ Hic vidisse Deus : videt hic Deus omnia primus ;”

and again elsewhere,

“ Indicio Solis (quis Solem fallere possit ?)

“ Cognita Vulcano conjugis acta suæ.”

Apollo's power of penetrating into such secrets is therefor undisputed, and he would not be unlikely to use it for his own gratification.

LINE 323.

By Styx I swear, that, were those charms

Once placed within my longing arms.

Apollo may seem to employ. with great levity the most solemn oath used by the Gods ; but we must remember what all poets say of lovers' vows : for instance Tibullus,

“ Nec jurare time, Veneris perjuria venti

“ Irrita per terras et freta longa ferant.”

And Ovid, de arte amandi, says that Jupiter himself used to swear falsely by the Styx to the ill-used Juno :

" Jupiter ex alto perjuria ridet amantum,

" Et jubet Æolios irrita ferre notos ;

" Per Styga Junoni falsum jurare solebat

" Jupiter, exemplo nunc favet ipse suo."

LINE 347.

For he, with feelings more refined,

Called to his aid the charms of mind.

Ovid, the great "Master of arts" in love affairs, gives this advice :

" Ut dominam teneas, nec te mirere relictum,

" Ingenii dotes corporis adde bonis."



MINERVA AND HERCULES.

IN that all-memorable scene
 Where Hercules was placed between
 Virtue and Pleasure, and his duty
 Was to reject the brighter beauty,
 It is a fact which should be known, 5
 Although not told by Xenophon,
 That, but for great Minerva's aid,
 His choice would never have been made.
 She, though invisible, was near
 Whisp'ring wise precepts in his ear ; 10
 And when, in spite of all she said,
 Towards Pleasure still he turned his head
 And hesitating seemed to stand,
 By her was seized his passive hand

And to severer Virtue given, 15
Whilst Pleasure, for the time, was driven
To seek for other votaries,
'Mongst men less prematurely wise.
Virtue, at first, of triumph proud,
Short respite to the youth allowed ; 20
Inciting him his strength to try on
Each monster that was famed in fable,
Boar, earth-born giant, hydra, lion,
And e'en Augeas' dirty stable.
But though, when thus by her inspired, 25
He held his glorious course untired,
Whene'er she chanced to give him leisure,
He listened to her rival Pleasure,
Who, not as yet intimidated,
For all such idle moments waited, 30
And, slyly, then, with grateful power,
Ruled o'er him for the passing hour,
Making the softened hero prove
His prowess in the wars of love.

This fact, in many cases clear, 35
 Will most in that great feat appear,
 Performed, fair dames, at Thespian's court ;
 Since in a labour of that sort
 Pleasure, I venture to assert, you
 Will own, had more to do than Virtue. 40
 Of course Minerva could not fail,
 With something like alarm, to hail
 The growing symptoms of delight
 With which her chosen favourite
 Received th' attentions of a siren. 45
 Whose presence dangers oft environ,
 And from the influence of whose sway
 Herself had snatched his youth away.
 But, still, an innate feeling taught her,
 (Remember, she was Jove's own daughter,) 50
 That, if pursued with moderation,
 There was no harm in relaxation ;
 And, therefore, she conceived it wise
 To his amours to shut her eyes,

Thinking that Heaven's great champion might 55
Demand indulgence as a right,
As long as with his grand career
Pleasure forbore to interfere.

But Pleasure, though at first contented
To find Minerva had consented 60
T' observe a sort of tacit truce,
Ere long was guilty of abuse
Of such indulgence, and instead
Of "hiding her diminished head,"
Whenever Virtue came to ask 65
The hero's aid in some great task,
Her influence, soon, so highly rose
That she was able to oppose
Each project that would interfere
With joys Alcides found so dear 70
That he, at length, to her resigned
The total guidance of his mind.

'Twas then that Virtue in distress
Betook her to her patroness :

And giving in a dreadful list 75

Of follies, ventured to insist

That punishment should now be fitted

To his enormities committed ;

And Hercules be made to know

The deference he ought to show 80

To her alone, the spotless dame,

Whose voice had led him on to fame.

Convinced that from her own neglect,

In part, had sprung the disrespect

To her unhappy client shown, 85

Minerva, willing to atone

For the past hardship of her fate,

Promised she soon would reinstate

Virtue in the distinguished post

That she had so unfairly lost. 90

But, ere she did so, she agreed

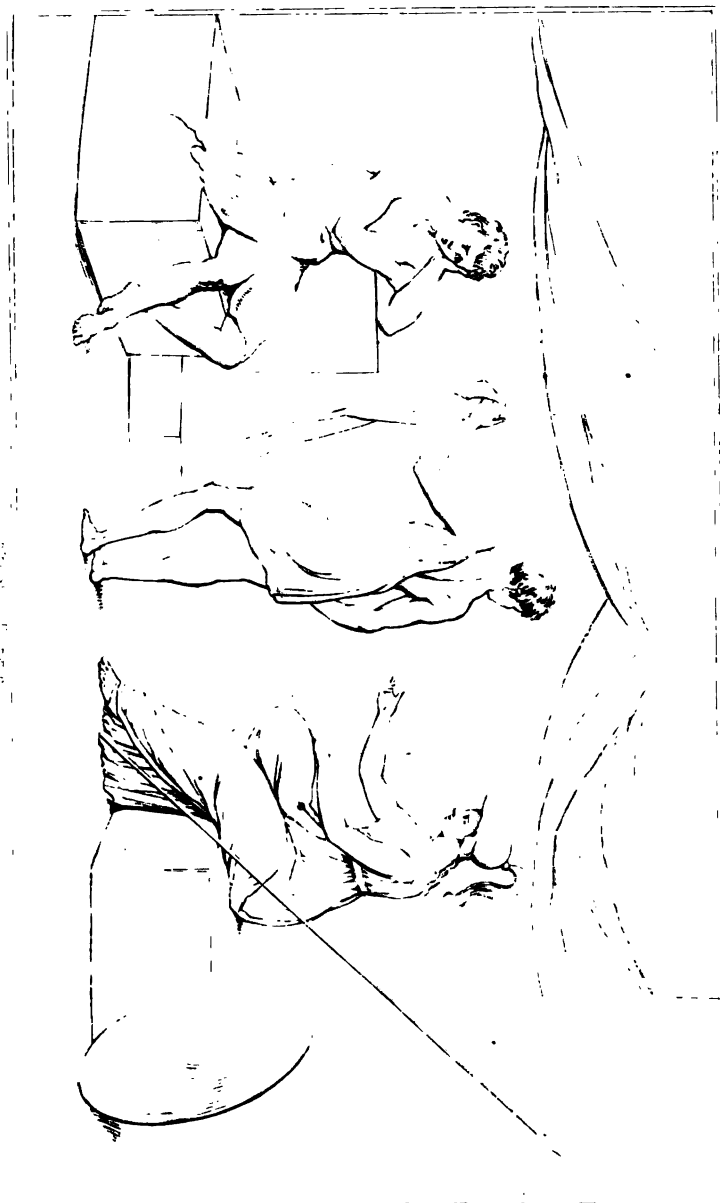
Some punishment should be decreed

To Hercules for his desertion,

And, though harsh acts were her aversion,

She thought that under her inspection 95
Imprisonment would bring reflection.
And, therefore, when from his career
Of folly summoned to appear,
The culprit came at her command,
She with her own immortal hand 100
In chains, the strongest she could find,
Hastened his guilty limbs to bind.

We hence may learn that it were vain,
Without the aid of Wisdom's chain,
To seek to keep a youthful mind 105
Within fair Virtue's bounds confined.



NOTES.

LINE 5.

*It is a fact which should be known,
Although not told by Xenophon.*

If I recollect aright, Xenophon makes the choice of Hercules perfectly voluntary on his part, and not the result of any prompting; but no inconsiderable share of prudence must have been required to induce so burly a youth to follow the paths of virtue in preference to pleasure; and as he was afterwards much favoured by Minerva, I think she was likely enough to have assisted him on this trying occasion.

LINE 24.

And c'en Augeas' dirty stable.

The labours of Hercules are too well known to need any comment. That last mentioned, although not a very high-sounding exploit, was not the least useful of his performances. By the introduction of the clear, reforming stream of the Alpheus, he swept away an accumulation of filth to which the animals which had produced it, had become so much accustomed as to suppose that it formed a part of the stable itself.

LINE 36.

*Will most in that great feat appear,
Performed, fair dames, at Thespius' court.*

Some say that Hercules remained fifty days at Thespiæ; but though this fact would diminish the wonder excited by the feat, the pleasure of its performance would remain.

LINE 50.

(Remember, she was Jove's own daughter.)

Minerva, according to all accounts, was much more severe in her virtue than the rest of the Goddesses, not excepting Diana; and if now and then an indulgent feeling for the gratification of the passion of love entered her wise head, it must have been inherited from her father.

LINE 55.

*Thinking that Heaven's great champion might
Demand indulgence as a right.*

Hercules, by the advice of Minerva, (who armed him for the purpose,) having been summoned by Jupiter, was the chief instrument of the defeat of the Giants. Horace says,

“ Domitosque Herculeâ manu
“ Telluris juvenes, unde periculum
“ Fulgens contremuit domus
“ Saturni veteris.”—Carm. lib. ii.

LINE 100.

She with her own immortal hand.

The learned say that the figure near the column is Hercules, and that the subject is Minerva's curing his insanity. I have taken the liberty to give another meaning to this curious fresco.

DIANA AND ENDYMION.

SUCH was Diana's reputation
 Throughout each ancient heathen nation,
 That wheresoe'er her shrines were placed
 She always was yclept "the chaste ;"
 And, though her effigies confess 5
 The lightness of her hunting dress,
 E'en when she went with scarce a rag on,
 In virtue still was deemed a dragon.
 Indeed Actæon's fate so high
 Had raised her fame for modesty, 10
 That she was forced to great exertion
 To keep it free from all aspersion,
 And, hence, was ever teasing Jove
 With stories of th' improper love

Of one or other naughty God, 15
And (though her scruples sounded odd
To him a most determined rake,)
Still he was forced her part to take ;
Whilst in his secret heart he thought her
A much too exemplary daughter. 20
There are, and I am one, who doubt
The virtue that makes such a rout ;
But in those simple days of old
Diana's tinsel passed for gold,
And she herself was spotless thought 25
Because she never had been caught.
In fact, her case was much the same
As that of any modern dame,
Who may as Queen of Fashion reign
With fifty lovers in her train 30
And rendezvous with each enjoy,
Though (like the theft of Spartan boy),
If once her loves produce "eclat"
With "crim. con." case in court of law,



Engraved by H. P. P. P.

Her grade is lost beyond recovery, 35
Not by the crime,—but the discovery.

But I must, now, proceed to tell
How chaste Diana's virtue fell ;
She, roving once on Latmos' height
By her own orb's voluptuous light, 40
Stretched on a mossy bank espied
Endymion, the shepherds' pride,
Naked as she herself, of old,
Had stood before the hunter bold,
But all unconscious, buried deep 45
In Jupiter's own gift of sleep.

Now, though in poor Actæon's case,
Amidst her comrades of the chase,
She made him suffer for his prying
By a most horrid mode of dying ; 50
Yet, when such case became her own
And she believed herself alone,
She scrupled not to gratify
Her female curiosity,

Stopping to view, with hasty scan, 55
That formidable creature man.

But the sly Goddess was deceived
In thinking she was unperceived ;
For Cupid, to indulge his spite,
Had followed close her steps that night, 60
And now, concealed behind a rock
Lest he her modesty should shock,
With joy beheld Night's haughty Queen
Over the humble shepherd lean.

He seized the opportunity 65
His oft derided power to try,
And buried in Diana's heart
A viewless and unerring dart,
Whose subtle poison through each vein
Spread new, but not unpleasing, pain ; 70
Till virtue, like retiring guest,
Gave place to passion in her breast.
Then first in hers she softly took
The hand that rested on his crook ;



Next, drawing nearer still, she placed 75

His passive arm around her waist ;

She parted next his clustering hair

And, stooping, kissed his forehead fair.

And then she gave a gentle shake,

Exclaiming, " Pretty boy, awake ! " 80

She shook, but vainly shook, for slumber,

Which Jove had granted to encumber

His suppliant, (strange was such a token

Of favour,) could not thus be broken.

But Cupid, who with wicked smile 85

Had watched his victim all the while,

Relenting now resolved to show

That he was still a gen'rous foe ;

And, as to Dian's great surprise

He stood before her downcast eyes, 90

Cried, " Goddess proud ! I well might now

" Deride your oft-repeated vow,

" That guilty passion ne'er should find

" A place in your exalted mind ;

“ But such is far from my intent, 95

“ For with my triumph I ’m content ;

“ And now am willing to remove

“ The slumber that impedes your love ;

“ If, by submissive bow, you ’ll own

“ That my superior power I ’ve shown.” 100

With look confused, though still divine,

The humbled Goddess made the sign ;

When Cupid, prompt his aid to give her,

Drew a fresh arrow from his quiver,

And, by a wound than hers still deeper, 105

To love aroused the heavy sleeper.

The waking youth with wonder eyed

The Goddess clinging to his side,

And, drowsily, received her kiss

At first unconscious of his bliss ; 110

But soon the arrow in his breast

Gave other thoughts than those of rest,

And, fired by Dian's virgin charms,
He clasped her yielding in his arms.

Saints here may deem it hard to find 115
A moral suited to their mind ;
But on their notice, if they deign
To read my fable, it is plain
This simple truth must needs intrude,
" Virtue is doubtful in a prude." 120

NOTES.

LINE 4.

She always was yclept "the chaste."

Even Horace gives Diana credit for being immaculate

"Sævis inimica virgo

"Belluis;"

and again :

"Notus et integræ

"Tentator Orion Dianæ,

"Virgineâ domitus sagittâ."

LINE 9.

Indeed Actæon's fate so high

Had raised her fame for modesty.

Ovid says of Actæon's punishment,

"Rumor in ambiguo est : aliis violentior æquo

"Visa Dea est ; alii laudant, dignamque severâ

"Virginitate vocant."—Met.

Surely the former were right, for Actæon's curiosity was even more pardonable than that of "Peeping Tom of Coventry."

LINE 39.

She, roving once on Latmos' height.

Mount Latmos was the scene of Diana's first "faux pas;" for Ovid, when enumerating the associations of exciting ideas and the awkward questions which might be made by young ladies in the temples of the Gods, says,

"In Venere Anchises, in Lunâ Latmius heros ;

"In Cerere Jasion qui referatur erit."

LINE 45.

But all unconscious, buried deep

In Jupiter's own gift of sleep.

The proverb, "Endymionis somnum dormire," as expressive of heavy sleep, arose from the request of that youth to Jupiter to be allowed to sleep as much as he desired. Theocritus says he envied him his privilege :

*Ζαλόντες μὲν ἄνθρωποι τὸν ἀνθρώπου ὕπνον ἠαυτοῦ
ἔδοκίμαον.*

LINE 50.

By a most horrid mode of dying.

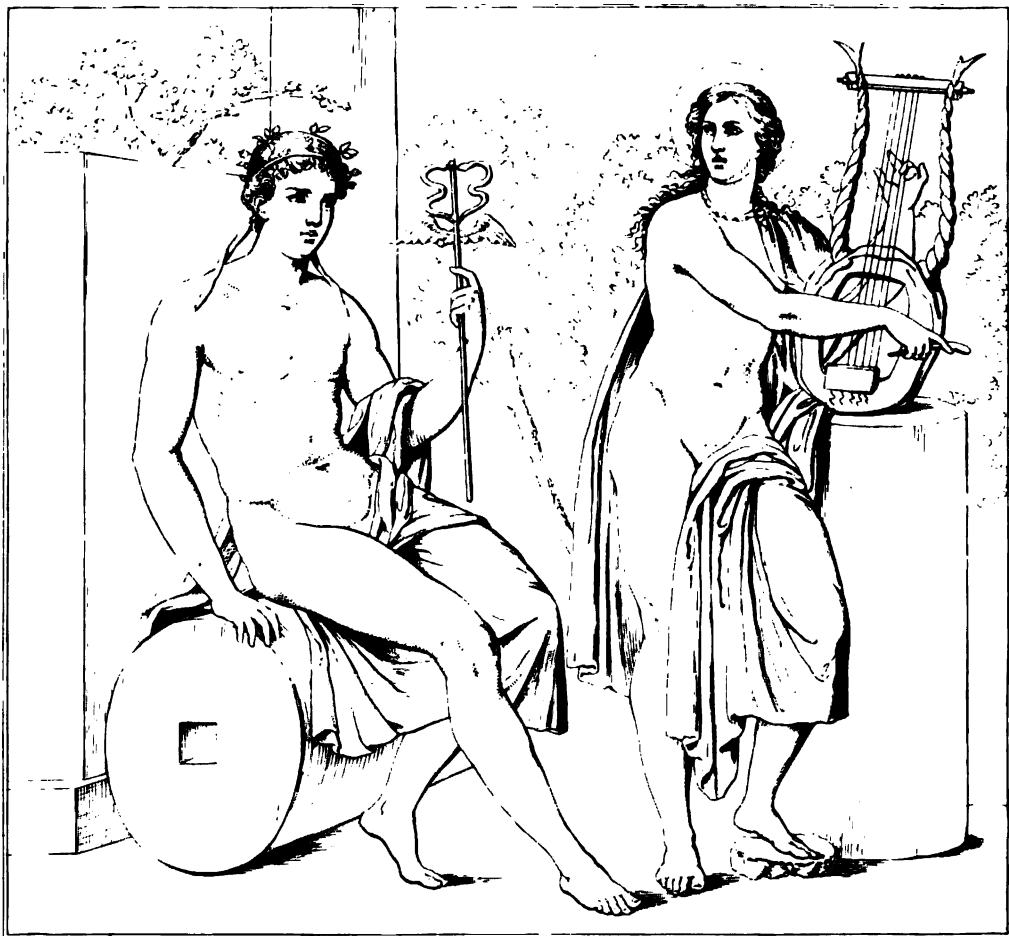
Ovid's description of the feelings of a sportsman killed by his own hounds is excellent; at the moment he is destroyed

by them, Actæon cannot help admiring the ardour of his pack :

“ Velletque videre,

“ Non etiam sentire canum fera facta suorum.”

The original fresco is in the house called after Actæon, in Pompeii.



Engraved by F. Neale.

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APOLLO AND MERCURY.

IN days more highly favoured, when
 The Gods took greater charge of men,
 And frequent visits paid on earth
 To those they smiled on at their birth,
 It chanced that in a certain town, 5
 (A place no doubt of great renown,
 Although its name I now forget,)
 Apollo once with Merc'ry met.

Their tastes, their feelings and pursuits,
 So often led them different routes, 10
 That it was not without surprise
 Each stood before the other's eyes.
 But though with them dislike and hate
 Were quite as mutual as great,

Still they saluted, not the less, 15
With true Olympic "politesse ;"
For Gods above, like men below,
Their feelings do not always show.

And now, as though with one consent,
To the same porch their steps they bent, 20
Where having gone the usual round
Of compliments, mere empty sound,
Each praised, by way of conversation,
His own peculiar avocation.

"What pity 'tis," exclaimed Apollo, 25
"That with your talents you should follow
"Such mean pursuits, and patronise
"A set of mortals I despise !
"Mean, sordid, money-making wretches,
"The height of whose ambition stretches 30.
"To glut their greedy eyes by stealth
"On hidden piles of useless wealth ;
"The great inventor of the lyre
"Deserves, at least, a worship higher

"Than thieves' and base mechanics' vows 35

"And offerings of pregnant sows."

"Thanks, Phœbus, for your compliment,"

Quoth Hermes, "if as such 'twas meant ;

"But, though to such polite abuse

"Of my vocation you give loose, 40

"With due submission, I conceive

"Men from my patronage receive,

"Whilst learning arts by which to live,

"More benefit than yours can give.

"Experience' self will plainly show it, 45

"Since no one ever saw a poet

"For whom Dame Fortune had unfurled

"Her sail to bear him through the world.

"It is a well-known fact that I

"Full many an humble votary 50

"To wealth and honours oft have led ;

"Your fav'rite, Homer, begged his bread !

"And, pri'thee, why should I aspire, . .

"As the inventor of the lyre,

- " To high-flown honours such as you . . . 55
" Are pleased to say you think my due ?
" That toy I own that I invented,
" But my lost labour soon repented :
" For, saving that it helped Amphion,
" Brought friendly dolphins round Arion, 60
" And served th' advent'rous Orpheus well .
" In that famed trip of his to hell,
" I do not recollect one single
" Real advantage from its jingle.
" It may have value in your eyes, 65
" But I, myself, more dearly prize
" The rod that in exchange I took,
" Which served you erst as shepherd's crook ;
" But which I use to keep all quiet
" In Charon's bark in case of riot." 70
" I know of old," Apollo cried,
" Your skill to make the weaker side
" In argument the stronger seem ;
" But such false reasoning I deem

- “ Unworthy of a God like you, 75
 “ And fitting only for the crew
 “ Of lawyers, who pursue their game
 “ Beneath your all-protecting name.
 “ You say your votaries you raise
 “ To wealth and honours : change the phrase ; 80
 “ The wealth, I ’m ready to allow,
 “ But own I never heard, till now,
 “ Of any honours men could gain
 “ By knavish traffic and chicane.
 “ Besides, of riches I deny 85
 “ Th’ intrinsical utility.
 “ Your friend, the Phrygian King, of old,
 “ Although so covetous of gold,
 “ Would have been glad enough, instead
 “ Of ingots, to have swallowed bread ; 90
 “ And starving on his glitt’ring fare
 “ Was forced his error to repair,
 “ And to the Lydian stream resign
 “ His dang’rous gift — that he might dine.

“ When Croesus, bursting with the pride 95
“ Of wealth and empire, once defied
“ The learned Solon to declare
“ That any mortal could compare
“ With him in unmixed happiness,
“ That sage replied, ‘ I must confess 100
“ ‘ That in your present prosp’rous state
“ ‘ You seem as happy as you ’re great ;
“ ‘ But Fortune is a fickle queen,
“ ‘ And, therefore, till the closing scene
“ ‘ Of life’s great drama, none should dare 105
“ ‘ Of happiness to vaunt his share.
“ ‘ You bid me name a man whose fate
“ ‘ To me appears more fortunate :
“ ‘ That man was Tellus ; he was poor
“ ‘ In all by which you set such store, 110
“ ‘ But rich in wisdom, and he sought
“ ‘ To act the virtues that he taught :
“ ‘ He saw his num’rous progeny
“ ‘ In worth and valour round him vie,

“ ‘ He saw his country, not less dear, 115
 “ ‘ Prosper in glorious career ;
 “ ‘ And, when in vict’ry’s arms he fell
 “ ‘ Fighting for all he loved so well,
 “ ‘ His lot in death was happier far
 “ ‘ Than yours, in your imperial car !’ 120
 “ Thus spake the wisest sage of Greece,
 “ And Fortune soon with droll caprice,
 “ Hurling the monarch from his height,
 “ Too plainly proved such judgment right.
 “ Now, Hermes, you remember well,— 125
 “ And Cræsus, when his empire fell,
 “ Calling aloud on Solon’s name,
 “ Preserved his body from the flame ;
 “ And thus, when worldly wealth had failed him,
 “ Philosophy alone availed him.” 130

Phœbus had scarcely finished speaking
When his opponent, who was seeking
Some subterfuge to aid his cause,
As lawyers search for verbal flaws,

Exclaimed, " My dear good friend, Apollo, 135

" Your argument I scarce can follow.

" I spoke of poetry, and said

" That oft to poverty it led ;

" You answer not that point at all,

" But up springs Midas at your call, 140

" And with him Cræsus, your tirade

" 'Gainst love of worldly wealth to aid.

" Now, though I am not such an ass

" As to assert that gold or brass

" Will make a loaf or a ragout ; 145

" Still, I maintain, 'tis not less true

" That, in their traffic, men below

" To money all their comforts owe.

" And whilst my votaries, 'tis plain,

" That article are wont to gain ; 150

" Yours, being given to abuse it,

" Are almost always found to lose it."

" Hold !" cried indignant Phœbus, " hold !

" It little needs I should be told

- “ That money makes resistless way 155
 “ Among the sordid sons of clay ;
 “ But, this you ought at least to know,
 “ Wealth unemployed is useless show,
 “ And little, therefore, helps the vile
 “ Amasser of a hoarded pile, 160
 “ Who, since to raise it is his end,
 “ But seldom has the soul to spend.
 “ The man of true poetic mind
 “ Possesses riches more refined ;
 “ To him the changing seasons bring 165
 “ Their varied gifts : the laughing Spring
 “ Relieves with imagery gay
 “ The beauties of his rural lay ;
 “ Behold him, in the genial heat
 “ Of Summer, seeking the retreat 170
 “ Where, stretched at ease, in beechen shade,
 “ His sylvan vows of love are made ;
 “ In Autumn Nature’s grander views
 “ Affect alike his changing muse,

“ And, as he strikes his sounding lyre, 175
“ His thoughts and feelings wander higher ;
“ E'en Winter's chilling snows among
“ He gathers subjects for his song,
“ In storms and elemental strife
“ Beholds the type of human life, 180
“ And learns, from Nature's yearly fall,
“ To hold him ready for the call
“ Of that relentless ' child of Night,'
“ Who spares no mortal in her flight.
“ But wherefore, say, that mocking air ; 185
“ What means that furtive smile, that stare ?”
 “ Excuse me,” said the roguish God,
“ My thoughts you know are always odd ;
“ And though you speak in terms so glowing,
“ It strikes me, when the north wind 's blowing,
“ Your poet would be none the worse 191
“ Had he some drachmas in his purse ;
“ Since, possibly, he might desire
“ Some better fuel than the fire

“ Of his own muse, or wish, at least, 195

“ To leave his intellectual feast,

“ And break sometimes his mortal fast

“ On less ethereal repast.

“ But by that angry brow, I see

“ You do not like my pleasantry, 200

“ And, since I cannot now make bold

“ To brave your anger, as of old,

“ I, hereby, cut our conference short,

“ And wish your Godship health and sport.”

Thus speaking, and in act to fly, 205

He raised his “petasus” on high ;

Phœbus the courtly bow returned,

But inly with resentment burned ;

For (as with men of modern day

After a similar display 210

Of state or of forensic skill,)

Each kept his own opinion still ;

And the result of their debate

Was to add rancour to their hate.

Although these Gods could not agree, 215
Their arguments will prove that we,
Whilst lofty talents we may prize,
Should not the useful arts despise.



NOTES.

LINE 3.

*And frequent visits paid on earth
To those they smiled on at their birth.*

I believe I am right in supposing that the ancients conceived all men, from the moment of their birth, to be under the influence or protection of some particular divinity. Horace surely alludes to some such current belief when he says,

“ Quem tu, Melpomene, semel
“ Nascentem placido lumine videris,
“ Illum non labor Isthmius.”

LINE 13.

*But though with them dislike and hate
Were quite as mutual as great.*

This is my own assumption, for which I have no other authority than the difference of their pursuits.

LINE 33.

The great inventor of the lyre.

The story of the invention of the lyre, as suggested by the

shell of a dead tortoise, is told in Lucian's dialogue between Mercury and Vulcan. Homer, in his hymn to Mercury, says,

Ἔρμης ἐν πρώτῳ χίλῳ τικτῆσθαι αἰδήσι:

and Horace,

"Te canam magni Jovis et Deorum

"Nuncium, curvæque lyræ parentem."

LINE 35.

Than thieves' and base mechanics' vows

And offerings of pregnant sows.

The Roman merchants and mechanics celebrated a festival in honour of Mercury on the 15th of May, in a temple near the Circus Maximus; the sacrifices were a pregnant sow, a calf, and the tongues of animals. The passage in Ovid's Fasti, book v. beginning at verse 663, if read to the end, will show what a shocking set of vagabonds Mercury patronized from sympathy:

"Memor Ortygias surripuisse boves."

Homer, in his hymn, says of this God,

Ἀρχὸς φηλητίων κικλήσιντο ἡμᾶτα πάντα.

LINE 46.

Since no one ever saw a poet

For whom Dame Fortune had unfurled

Her sail to bear him through the world.

Poets have been proverbially poor from the days of Homer to those of "the splendid shilling." What says the epigram?

" See seven famed towns contend for Homer dead,
" Through which the living Homer begged his bread."

LINE 59.

For, saving that it helped Amphion.

Amphion's pleasant mode of building is well known; Horace thus alludes to it:

" Mercuri, nam te docilis magistro
" Movit Amphion lapides canendo."

There is a very happy conceit, apropos of this subject, in the shape of an inscription over the gateway of a house in one of the back streets of Naples: the house was, I suppose, built by some Paganini of the day, and the inscription is

" Amphion Thebas, ego domum."

Herodotus, lib. i. c. 23, informs us, with the gravity of an historian, that Arion was saved from drowning by the dolphins which the sound of his lyre had previously attracted to the vicinity of his vessel. Propertius alludes to this *fact* when, in his elegy to Cynthia, he describes his having dreamed of her shipwreck, and says,

" Sed tibi subsidio delphinum currere vidi,
" Qui, puto, Arioniam vexerat antè lyram;"

and Ovid, *de arte amandi*, lib. iii. v. 632.

“ Quamvis mutus eram voci favisse putatur

“ *Piscis, Arionis fabula nota lyre.*”

Horace says, addressing the lyre of Orpheus,

“ Cessit immanis tibi blandienti

“ Janitor aulæ

“ Cerberus ;”

and much more to the same purpose.

LINE 66

But I, myself, more dearly prize

The rod that in exchange I took.

Mercury exchanged the lyre for the “caduceus” with which Apollo used to drive the flocks of Admetus; but which Mercury afterwards used for very different cattle and purposes, as we are informed by Virgil, *Æn.* iv. v. 242:

“ Tum virgam capit : hæc animas ille evocat Orco

“ Pallentes, alias sub Tartara tristia mittit.”

The “caduceus,” when Mercury received it, was merely a straight stick; but being told that it had the quality of quieting any dispute, he, to try its virtue, threw it on two fighting serpents, who immediately became reconciled, and continued ever after to twine amicably round their “mediator.”

LINE 71.

*I know of old, Apollo cried,
Your skill to make the weaker side
In argument the stronger seem.*

I here allude to Mercury's being the God of eloquence.
Horace addresses him,

"Mercuri facunde, nepos Atlantis:"

and Ovid says of him,

"Quo didicit cultè lingua favente loqui."

He was a great protector of lawyers.

LINE 93.

*And to the Lydian stream resign
His dang'rous gift—that he might dine.*

When Midas made his well-known request to Bacchus,
Ovid says, Met. lib. xi.

"Annuit optatis, nocituraque munera solvit
"Liber, et indoluit quod non meliora petisset.
* * * * *
* * * "Gaudenti mensas posuère ministri.
* * * * *
"Tum vero, sive ille suâ Cerealia dextrâ
"Munera contigerat, Cerealia dona rigebant."

The Pactolus, after Midas had washed in it, changed all its sand into gold-dust.

LINE 104.

*And, therefore, till the closing scene
Of life's great drama, none should dare
Of happiness to vaunt his share.*

According to Herodotus, Cræsus did not commence the conversation by announcing himself as the happiest of men ; but asked Solon whom he (Solon) esteemed as such, in the full expectation of being himself named. I have followed Plutarch's version of the story. The sentiment expressed by Solon, that no one can justly be said to be happy until his end shall be ascertained, is very common among the ancient writers. Sophocles (at the end of the *Œdipus Tyrannus*, and again in the *Trachiniæ*), and Euripides (in several places), express this idea ; and Ovid,

“ Ultima semper

“ Expectanda dies homini ; dicique beatus

“ Ante obitum nemo supremaque funera debet.”

LINE 183.

*Of that relentless 'child of Night,'
Who spares no mortal in her flight.*

Mors was born of Night without a father. See Eurip. in *Alceste*.

LINE 201.

*And, since I cannot now make bold
To brave your anger, as of old.*

Mercury alludes to that affair of the oxen and quiver so beautifully described by Horace :

“ Te, boves, olim, nisi reddidisses
“ Per dolum amotas, puerum minaci
“ Voce dum terret, viduus pharetrâ
“ Risit Apollo.”

THE END.

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